THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

XXVIII

(August-November 1925)

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

XXVIII
(August - November 1925)



THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

April 1968 (Chaitra 1890)

PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR, THE PUBLICATIONS DIVISION, DELHI-
AND PRINTED IN INDIA BY SHANTILAL HARJIVAN SHAH,
NAVAJIVAN PRESS, AHMEDABAD-14

PREFACE

The volume covers August 1, to November 22, 1925, a period during which Gandhiji toured Bengal, Bihar, U.P. and Kutch, and addressed diverse conferences and meetings. With the rehabilitation of the Swaraj Party at the AICC meeting at Patna, politics once again entered the Congress in a big way. The emphasis shifted to economic matters, as in the founding of the All-India Spinners' Association, and the intensification of the movement for swadeshi through a wider and better organized use of the charkha. On the social front, Gandhiji continued to campaign for the removal of untouchability and the adoption of the right methods of cow-protection. Wherever he went, he held dialogue with various cross-sections and classes of the people—women, students and teachers; Congress workers and factory labour, orthodox Hindus, social reformers and Christian missionaries.

In meeting the overall political situation, he continued to stress constructive work and the education of the people. Awakening the people to an awareness of their condition was possible only through sustained public work (pp. 135-6). To the provocative speech of the Secretary of State, Lord Birkenhead, the only answer was "more work". Even a unity conference would be called only when he saw a "general disposition to subordinate one's individual or party views to the present needs of the country" (p. 154).

At the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Patna on September 22, power was transferred to the Swarajists' hands. Gandhiji now laid down a simple formula to regulate the relations between the two wings of the Congress: "Wherever the two parties are evenly balanced, Non-co-operators or No-changers should surrender full control to the Swarajists and voluntarily give up office if they hold any. Where the No-changers are in an overwhelming majority, they should not hamper the Swarajists, and should help them wherever they conscientiously can" (pp. 261-2). The other significant change at Patna was the widening of the franchise in the Constitution, enabling more people to join the Congress, now converted into an essentially political organization which would carry on its work through the Swaraj Party (p. 355). As for his own role in the re-oriented Congress Gandhiji observed: "Wherever possible, I shall assist the Swarajists in

accordance with my promise; but the Congress programme will . . . be framed by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in consultation with Pandit Motilalji" (p. 437). About the ultimate character of the national body Gandhiji had no doubts: "Let the Congress be ever so democratic, but democracy must not be brag and bluster, a passport to receiving service from the people. If *Vox populi* is to be *Vox dei,* it must be the voice of honesty, bravery, gentleness, humility and complete self-sacrifice" (p. 464).

Swadeshi received more and more enunciation during this time. India was a land of peasants: crores of people were without any occupation for part of the year. The result was idleness. "There can be no swaraj for an idle nation. Idleness leads to destruction. . . . This idleness is a great disease with us whose symptom is poverty" (p. 135). The idlers had to be provided an activity which would bring about the good of the individual and society. The spinning-wheel alone could offer this (p. 136). But it had a wider significance. "Its message is one of simplicity, service of mankind, living so as not to hurt others, creating an indissoluble bond between the rich and the poor, capital and labour, the prince and the peasant. That larger message is naturally for all" (p. 188).

The spirit of swadeshi had nothing exclusive or chauvinistic about it. It "was a discriminating, conservative spirit," Gandhiji told a students' meeting at Calcutta, and "would retain all that was best in national life, in ancient tradition and, at the same time, absorb by assimilation—not by base imitation—all that was best in the modern world, all that was best in the West, so that from good they might grow to better, and from better to still better" (p. 132).

When the Poet, Rabindranath Tagore offered criticism of the spinning-wheel and the opposition to machinery (Appendix V), Gandhiji in *Young India* explained at length his standpoint: "The frank criticism pleases me. . . . Machinery has its place; it has come to stay. But it must not be allowed to displace the necessary human labour" (pp. 426-8). Insinuations of personal jealousy Gandhiji dismissed summarily, observing: "Where the differences between us are not fundamental—and these I have endeavoured to state—there is nothing in the Poet's argument which I cannot endorse and still maintain my position regarding the charkha. The many things about the charkha which he has ridiculed I have never said. The merits I have claimed for the charkha remain undamaged by the Poet's battery" (p. 429). And he added: "If I adore the Poet, as he knows, I do in spite of differences between us". (p. 430).

The All-India Spinners' Association, the establishment of which had been decided at the Patna Congress meeting, Gandhiji defended as "an Association for service and not for satisfying one's desire for power and authority" (p. 290). In such a body he saw no scope at all for rivalry in regard to authority or leadership.

References to the communal problem came up off and on during Gandhiji's tours. His advice generally was that the two major communities must come together through "absorption in common constructive work" (p. 154), while arriving at a sincere understanding, without sacrifice of principle, on matters in dispute, such as music before mosques (p. 367).

Gandhiji's attitude to religion was consistently rational and socially oriented. Writing on cow-protection, he observed: "I believe that from its very nature religion embraces economic, political and other problems. The religion which is opposed to true economics is no religion, nor that which is opposed to true politics. Economics devoid of religion should be shunned, and political power uninformed with the spirit of religion is Satanic. There is no such thing as dharma unrelated to economic and other activities. Individuals and society, both survive through dharma and perish without it . . . If cow-protection is opposed to true economics, we have no choice but to give up the effort. Not only that, but we shall discover in that case that we cannot succeed in protecting cows even if we wish to do so" (p. 158).

In regard to the removal of untouchability, too, he saw that mere propaganda would not do. "There is no good of propaganda when there is no solid work behind to elevate the *Panchamas*" (p. 168). Speaking at Patna, he observed: "Untouchability has made Indians untouchables in the whole world and those who wanted to see the condition of untouchable Indians should go to South Africa and realize what untouchability meant" (p. 196). He was convinced that untouchability as it was being practised was not and could never be an essential part of Hinduism. "There is sheer ignorance and cruelty behind it. I look upon it as an excrescence of Hinduism. It does not protect religion, but suffocates it" (p. 348).

Speaking to teachers, Gandhiji traced the cause of foreign domination to the people's own inherent weakness. "Self-government means continuous effort to be independent of Government control, whether it is foreign Government or whether it is national. Swaraj Government will be a sorry affair if people look up to it for the regulation of every detail of life" (pp. 33-4). "Swaraj will

not drop from the clouds. It will be the fruit of patience, perseverance, ceaseless toil, courage and an intelligent appreciation of the environment" (p. 117).

If India's freedom was for Gandhiji an aspect of individual and social morality, it had also a bearing on world affairs. In a memorable speech at Calcutta on August 28, he said: "I want freedom of my country so that the resources of my country might be utilized for the benefit of mankind just as the cult of patriotism teaches us today that the individual has to die for the family, the family has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the Province and the Provinces for the whole nation. . ." And speaking of his idea of Indian nationalism, he added: "My love . . . of nationalism, or my idea of nationalism is that my country may become free—free that if need be, the whole of the country may die—so that the human race may live. There is no room here for race hatred. Let that be our nationalism" (p. 129).

Abroad there was growing appreciation of the larger significance of Gandhiji's message and mission. From Europe and America came letters seeking light on certain problems. Besides replying to correspondents, he wrote in *Young India* on the common basis of violence between India and Europe: "The peoples of Europe have no doubt political power, but no swaraj. Asian and African races are exploited . . . by the ruling class or caste under the sacred name of democracy. At the root, therefore, the disease appears to be the same as in India. The same remedy is, therefore, likely to be applicable. Shorn of all the camouflage, the exploitation of the masses of Europe is sustained by violence" (p. 148).

To invitations to visit Europe or America Gandhiji gave a characteristic reply: "My patriotism includes the good of mankind in general. Therefore, my service of India includes the service of humanity . . . If I go to America or to Europe, I must go on my strength, not in my weakness, . . . I mean, of my country" (p. 186). It was this same sense of diffidence that prompted him to turn down a request from Dr. M. A. Ansari to cable to the League of Nations for intervention in the case of the Druses in Southern Syria. He wrote in *Young India*, 12-11-1925: "I do not believe in making appeals when there is no force behind them, whether moral or material. Moral force comes from the determination of the appellants to do something, to sacrifice something for the sake of making their appeal effective. . . . Unless we recognize and are prepared to reduce to practice this principle,

we can but expose the Congress and ourselves to ridicule, if not worse" (p. 440).

Gandhiji had a lively awareness of his limitations. He claimed to be "merely a seeker after truth, undoubtedly striving to attain human perfection which all of us can attain by continuous effort" (p. 67). He did not "claim to lead or have any party, if only for the reason that . . . I seem to be constantly growing. I must respond to varying conditions and yet remain changeless within" (p. 87). His life was "full of joy in the midst of incessant work" (p. 270). He found much cause for depression in things happening: "When I think of the horizon about us", he wrote to Dr. Ansari, "my heart becomes sick and weary. And when I listen to the still small voice within, I derive hope and smile in spite of the conflagration raging around me" (pp. 437-8). It was this that sustained him.

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text generally spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews, as also passages which are not by Gandhiji, have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes and omissions, where necessary, have been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from Gujarati and Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where English translations are available, they have been used with such changes as were necessary to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication. The writings are placed under the date of publication, except where they carry a date-line or where the date of writing has special significance and is ascertainable.

References to Volume I of this series are to the August 1958 edition. References to *An Autobiography* cite only the Part and Chapter, in view of the varying pagination in different editions.

In the source-line, the symbol S.N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G.N. refers to those available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the volume are also provided at the end.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For material in this volume, we are indebted to the Sabarmati Ashram Preservation and Memorial Trust and Sangrahalaya, the Navajivan Trust and the Gujarat Vidyapith Granthalaya, Ahmedabad; the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; National Archives of India, New Delhi; Shri Chhaganlal Gandhi, Ahmedabad; Smt. Vasumati Pandit, Surat; Shri Narayan Desai, Bardoli; Shri G. D. Birla, Calcutta; Shri Narandas Gandhi, Rajkot; Smt. Sushilabehn Gandhi, Phœnix, Durban; Smt. Rajmohini Rudra, Allahabad; Smt. Shardabehn Fulchand Shah, Wadhwan; Shri Radhanath Rath, Cuttack; Shri Kashinath N. Kelkar, Poona; Shri Dahyabhai Manoharbhai Patel, Ahmedabad; Shri Parasram Mehrotra, New Delhi; Shri V. G. Desai, Poona; Shri P. A. Narielwala, Bombay; Shri Shantikumar Morarji, Bombay; the publishers of the books—*Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne*, *Bapuna Patro—Sardar Vallabhbhaine*, *Bapuni Prasadi*, *A Bunch of Old Letters*, *Gandhijiki Chhatrachhayamen*, *In the Shadow of the Mahatma*, *Krishnath College Centenary Commemoration Volume* and *Mahadevbhaini Diary* and the following newspapers and journals: *Aaj*, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *The Bombay Chronicle*, *The Englishman*, *Forward*, *The Hindu*, *The Hindustan Times*, *The Leader*, *The Modern Review*, *Navajivan*, *The Searchlight* and *Young India*.

For research and reference facilities, we owe thanks to the All-India Congress Committee Library, the Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, the Indian Council of World Affairs Library, the Research and Reference Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi; the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya and the Gujarat Vidyapith Granthalaya, Ahmedabad; and Shri Pyarelal Nayyar, New Delhi; and for assistance in photo-printing documents, to the Photo Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi.

CONTENTS

world calls him a saint. Tulsidas had no adjective harsh enough to describe himself as a sinner. The world regards him also as a saint. Lastly, I wonder if you know that the Christian Literature Society continues to sell the utterly unbalanced views and opinions of Mr. Murdoch and others. And if you only knew the literature in the vernaculars that is distributed through tens of thousands of leaflets and booklets, you will, perhaps, appreciate the force of my remarks. These things hurt me only because I know that they believe the teachings of Jesus, in whose name they are said and written; and it hurts me also because Indian Christians are fed upon such ignorance which they, in their simplicity, imbibe as God's truth, and hence learn to hate those who were once their friends, companions and relatives. You perhaps do not know that I mix as freely with Christian Indians in the lower strata of society as I mix with a similar class of Hindus and Mussalmans. I say these things [not] by way of argument, but to tell you that I spoke in that meeting out of fullness of knowledge and love. I went there in a spirit of service and I have written this also in the same spirit. That is the best appreciation I can tender of your well-meant letter. Please remember me to the friends who accompanied you.

Just after finishing dictating the foregoing letter, I read a letter from another Christian friend, this time an Indian. It is a long letter, but I cannot help giving you two extracts from it. Here they are:

> (1) I was greatly disappointed to hear you at the Calcutta Missionary Conference yesterday. I was under the impression all along that you were a true follower of Jesus Christ, but the utterance which you made last night broke my heart altogether. I do not know how I can call you 'Seeker for the Truth,' when you say Jesus Christ is only a great teacher and nothing else. What a great pity, a man of your calibre and culture says—Jesus Christ is a teacher. I must say, in that case, that either you have not cared to study the noble life of Jesus Christ intrinsically and prayerfully, or you studied the life with a deep prejudice in mind.
>
> (2) It has been said by the leading men of different religions, other than Christians, supposed to be seekers for Truth, that Chaitanya, Buddha, Mahomed, Krishna and Christ are all the same. This is a most idle talk; where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise. This class of people have no business to call themselves—"Seeker for Truth"—they should be called the "enemies for Truth"—Truth is Truth and there is not the slightest compromising element in it. I cannot believe even for a moment that a true Hindu is a Christian, or a true Buddhist a Hindu, and so on. How could you say that at the meeting yesterday? I am

at a loss to discern. A man of your calibre and learning and experience would be the last man to utter such blunders.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

After the letter was typed, I got a copy of the Hymn. Here it is. You will observe that the good Bishop was thinking only of non-Christians. The Hymn still finds a place in ordinary hymn books. I have often heard it sung in churches in South Africa.

M. K. G.

[To
THE REV. ALLWOOD
BARRACKPORE]

From a photostat: S.N. 10648

3. *LETTER TO A FRIEND*[1]

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
August 1, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. A man who owns land which is haunted by wild beasts will be able to excuse himself for shooting them. It would be classed as inevitable *himsa*. It will be justified on the ground of necessity, but there is no doubt that, if one has a full perception of ahimsa, it would be well for him to let his land be overrun by wild beasts or be himself killed by them. Ahimsa is not a mechanical matter, it is personal to everyone. Moreover, possession of property against the whole world is inconsistent with ahimsa. A man who will follow the principle of non-violence to its uttermost limit has nothing in this world he can call his own. He must merge himself into the whole, which includes snakes, scorpions, tigers, wolves, etc. There are instances on record of innocent men whose innocence even wild beasts have recognized. We must all strive to reach that stage.

The same remark applies to your second question. It is *himsa* to kill the germs and the insects, but even as we commit *himsa* by taking vegetable food (for vegetables have life) but regard it as inevitable, so must we treat the germ life. You will recognize

[1] The identity of the addressee is not ascertainable.

that the doctrine of necessity can be stretched so as to justify even man-eating. A man who believes in ahimsa carefully refrains from every act that leads to injury. [My] argument only applies to those who believe in ahimsa. The necessity that I have in mind is a universal necessity, hence it is not permissible to take ahimsa beyond a limit. That is why the Shastras of custom only permit *himsa* in certain cases. It is not only lawful but obligatory upon everyone to make the least use possible of the permission and relaxation. It is unlawful to go beyond the limitation.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 10595

4. *SPEECH AT TILAK ANNIVERSARY MEETING*[2]

CALCUTTA,
August 1, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi, speaking in Hindustani, said that the great *mantra* that Bal Gangadhar gave to India was that "Swaraj was their birthright." By swaraj he (Lokamanya) meant swaraj for the toiling crores of India. To Mahatmaji's mind the call was clear: If they wished to achieve swaraj for the masses of India, they must have to work for it through charkha and khaddar and thus identify them with the poor, starving millions of Hindustan. If they really wanted to get inspiration from the memory of Lokamanya and if they really desired swaraj for the poor, then they should hear the old man speaking to them in season and out of season and take to the spinning-wheel. Let them promise from that very day that they would discard foreign cloth and take to swadeshi homespun and hand-woven cloth.

The other day, Mahatmaji proceeded, they declared a boycott of British goods in reply to Lord Birkenhead's statement. He had his doubt as to the possibility of its achievement. But although he was on principle against boycott, he would be glad if the people discarded British cloth. They had failed to act up to their leaders' advice for the last four years, they had not as yet universally taken to charkha and khaddar. They might, however, from now

[1] The copy carries corrections in Gandhiji's hand.
[2] The meeting was held at the Albert Hall. J. M. Sen Gupta presided.

rectify their mistake and take a solemn vow from today onward to discard the use of foreign goods and use swadeshi.[1]

Foreward, 4-8-1925

5. NEW RITUALS

In the meetings and functions that were held after the death of Deshbandhu, besides the commonly practised rites, people introduced such new rituals as they found appropriate. *Kirtans* were held at many places in Bengal, the poor were fed at some places while, at other places, people took baths, etc., and performed religious ceremonies. The villagers of Chadia, in Kathiawar, observed the day[2] in the following manner:

1. They prayed to God for peace to the departed soul and for the birth in India of others like Deshbandhu.
2. They gave balls of sweetmeat to dogs and cows.
3. They refrained from using the bullock to plough or to draw water from the well.
4. They decided to store enough good quality cotton in the coming year for their own domestic use.

At some other places, the day was spent in fasting and spinning. Such innovations are to be welcomed. To make such days the occasion for promoting those beneficial activities which one can think of and which were dear to the departed persons, is a good way of showing our love for them.

Not using the bullock for ploughing or drawing water indicates kindness to animals. Except during the monsoon, we are almost always callously engaged in drawing water and so on. Actually, this does more harm than good. People have lost nothing but have rather gained something where it is customary to give a weekly day of rest to servants and animals; hence it is a good beginning to stop drawing water with the leather bucket and thereby giving rest to servants and animals on such occasions of mourning for great men.

Misplaced Kindness

Giving sweetmeat balls to dogs and cows, however, is misplaced kindness. There is no reason to believe that just because

[1] At the conclusion, Gandhiji addressed an overflow meeting at College Square. No report is available.

[2] Presumably, July 1, 1925, the day on which the *shraddha* ceremony of C. R. Das was performed

we like these sweets, cows and dogs also like them and are benefited by eating them. Animals have not had their taste for food spoilt. If even among human beings the taste for food varies, what can we say of animals? An Englishman, if given a sweetmeat ball, would throw it away. Many of us would not like English sweets. If anyone served a meal of *rotis* in Madras, our cuntrymen there would be unable to eat it. It is useless to serve a meal of rice in the Punjab. What then is the meaning of serving such sweets to cows and dogs? The fact that dogs eat these up is no argument in support of feeding them with these sweets. It is kindness to give grass to undernourished cattle. In villages, however, there should be no such cattle. There is no kindness in giving such food to dogs; I see only ignorance in it. We are exchanging wakefulness for sleep. We increase their progeny by tempting dogs in an improper way and, then, since no one owns them, they remain undernourished. All dogs should be kept as pets. The existence of stray dogs is a sign of our sin and our ignorance. Ahmedabad claims to practise the religion of compassion by driving out its dogs without any owners from one place to another. A little reflection on the religion of compassion would make it clear to us that practising kindness only in name doubles the amount of cruelty and violence. Violence is involved, first, in catching these dogs and driving them away from familiar surroundings and, second, in releasing them in other poor villages. For the nuisance of stray dogs, civilized human beings should seek out a solution on a consideration of both ethics and expediency. Such tasks can be accomplished only if the *mahajans*[1] make a profound study of the religion of compassion. And, if they do not do so, the time is at last drawing near when irreligious persons in authority will hurriedly destroy dogs. The immediate solution seems to be to start a home for stray dogs under the supervision of someone who is an expert in the matter.

Starting from a common topic, I have gone into details. However, on reading the resolution to give sweetmeat balls to dogs, I saw before my mind's eye the invasions of stray dogs on the Sabarmati Ashram and that has led me to put forward some views for the benefit of the *mahajans*.

In our country, however, just as there are lean and famished animals, similarly there are such human beings too. We have been piling up sin by regarding it a virtue to let them live on thus.

[1] Representative bodies managing the affairs of communities

Last week I had been to Suri. As I am regarded as a servant of the poor, the *mahajans* of that place fed the poor in my honour. Their meal was fixed for the same time as that of the arrival of my train. I was taken in a car which passed between rows of poor people sitting down for their meal on either side of the road. I felt ashamed and, had I not been afraid of being discourteous, I would have got down then and there and run away. What kind of an arrogant servant of the poor was this who rode in comfort in a car between rows of people eating? I said a few words about this in the meeting at Suri. I saw a similar sight in an ancient wealthy family in Calcutta. I had been taken there in order to collect funds for the memorial to Deshbandhu. The palace of this family is known as the 'Marble Palace' and it is indeed made exclusively of marble. The building is a majestic one and well worth seeing. In front of this palace, the poor are always fed. They are given cooked cereals. The owners had asked me to come at the very time when these people are fed with the innocent purpose of demonstrating their generosity to me and with the good intention of pleasing me. I had agreed to go without giving any thought to the matter. However, I was even more pained and irritated on seeing the sight there than I had been at Suri. I was not taken in a car between rows of diners but, wherever I went, a whole crowd always followed me. This crowd rushed towards me from in between the people who were having their meal. The poor diners necessarily came into contact with the feet of these people. For a moment they even stopped eating. If in their souls they had blessed me, I would congratulate them on their restraint and generosity. What a contrast between that dusty courtyard and the tall, snow-white palace! I felt as if the palace laughed at those poor people and as if their benefactors who carelessly walked through them joined in this laughter.

Could there be any merit in feeding people in this manner? To me, it appeared to be a mere sin committed through thoughtlessness and ignorance, even though the sentiment behind it may be of the purest nature. Such *sadavartas*[1] are to be found at various places in the country. These add to our poverty, idleness, hypocrisy, theft, etc. This is because, if food is available without effort, those who are habitually lazy remain idle and become poorer. According to the saying that Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do, these poor people learn to steal. Over

[1] Institutions where free meals are supplied

and above this, they practise other vices which are harmful to them. I see only evil resulting from these *sadavartas*. The wealthy should give some thought to the free meals they serve in charity. It is not necessary to show that merit does not lie in all charity. *Sadavarta* is indeed to be commended for the lame, the crippled and those who are disabled by disease. Even when feeding these persons, however, some courtesy should be shown. Even the disabled should not be fed with thousands of people watching them. There should be a proper place, private and quiet, for feeding them. In fact, there should be special ashramas for them. There are a few such places scattered over India. Wealthy persons who wish to feed the disabled should either send their donations to such good ashramas or establish them at places where they do not exist and are needed.

Some sort of occupation must be found for the disabled poor. The spinning-wheel is the only means of benefiting hundreds of thousands of persons.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-8-1925

6. *WHAT ABOUT GUJARAT?*

Perhaps some people are wondering how Gujarat should interpret the letter[1] I have written to Pandit Motilalji. What is meant by the Swarajists capturing the Congress? Should Gujarat too change its opinion? Or, what should the Gujarat Provincial Committee do?

In the first place, the fact is that I have merely stated my views. I have not made any pact with anyone or on behalf of anyone. I hope that all members will attend the A.I.C.C. Session.[2] They will independently express their views and the resolution passed by them will be regarded as the one to be accepted.

Taking it for granted, however, that all the members will accept my views, that would only mean that, on the strength of the Congress resolution, the ban that existed on introducing political matters into the Congress will henceforth be lifted. If my advice is accepted, the Swarajists who have had to keep their mouths shut because of the Congress resolution will no longer have to do so. What is it that can be done by me alone and

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVII, p. 398.
[2] This session was held at Patna during September 22-24, 1925.

that I should do myself, because of the death of Deshbandhu and in reply to Lord Birkenhead's speech? It was my own idea that political matters should be kept out of the Congress for the time being. The pact too was between myself and the Swarajists. I alone can free them from this bond immediately. The Congress Committee is free to act as it chooses. If a sizable number of the members of that committee are opposed to my advice, I shall have to keep it to myself.

Accepting my advice would only mean that, in those provinces where there are many Swarajists, they could introduce and discuss any resolution relating to political matters through the provincial committees. Wherever, as in Gujarat, the committee has a large number of No-changers as members, the proposed change would have no great effect. Even in such places, I would like to give as much weight as possible to the Swarajists. Sitting in Bengal, I could not say how this could be done. We see how that party has impressed the British authorities and, it is our dharma to make good use of this impression. There are many selfless men and women in that party. Their hearts are full of patriotism. Such persons deserve to be honoured, irrespective of the party to which they belong. Everyone has the right to hold his own independent opinions. That independence is worth maintaining.

The doors of the Congress cannot be forcibly closed against anyone. So long as we cannot create faith in khadi and the power of the spinning-wheel amongst the educated class, the latter can never attain a place of importance. It is, I think, a barren gesture to give the spinning-wheel an important place for fear of embarrassing me or in order to keep me in the Congress. It would have significance only if the educated class has faith in it or if this class wishes to give prominence to those who believe in it. Even at a meeting of the members of the Swaraj Party, no one ever thought of displacing the spinning-wheel. Even if they had wished to do so, I was ready to agree to it, but they were not prepared to listen to any talk even about doing so. They were wholly satisfied if those who did not spin were allowed to contribute money instead. They are not even prepared to do away with the necessity of putting on khadi clothes. If this is the extent to which the Swarajists think independently, I would regard it as promoting effectively the cause of khadi.

The very terms Swarajists and No-changers should be given up. The number of persons going into Legislative Assemblies will always be small. Everyone cannot go there. I do not

see any reason for opposing this. If the very people who enter them can create the atmosphere for civil disobedience, they will come out of their own accord or give all possible help while continuing to remain in the Legislative Assemblies. Or, they will have to be opposed if and when they offer resistance to civil disobedience. That the Swarajists would do so I cannot imagine.

Those who understand the meaning of civil disobedience will sing the praises of the spinning-wheel all the twenty-four hours; hence my suggestion is that the latter should be given the same standing that the Swarajists occupy today or, in other words, an association for the spinning-wheel should be founded under the auspices of the Congress, whose only task would be to spread the use of the spinning-wheel and khadi. That association should also collect the yarn stipulated as a condition for the right to vote and should keep that yarn with itself. It should frame its own independent constitution. If work is carried on in this way, the two movements would continue to function without coming into clash with each other, but assisting each other.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-8-1925

7. *MY NOTES*

DADABHAI CENTENARY

The centenary of Dadabhai Naoroji's birth falls on the ensuing 4th September. Shri Bharucha has given us a timely reminder of this. We knew Dadabhai as the Grand Old Man of India. He dedicated his life to the country. He made the service of the country our dharma. He was the friend of the poor of our land. It was he who first presented the picture of the poverty of India. To this day, no one has been able to contradict the statistics he furnished. He made no distinction between Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and others. He regarded them all as the children of Mother India, and hence all received equal service from him. His two grand-daughters have, we find, inherited in full measure this trait.

How shall we celebrate the centenary of this great servant of India? We shall, of course, hold meetings and that too not only in cities, but also in all villages to which the voice of the Congress can be carried. And what shall we do there? Praise Dadabhai? If this is all that we wish to do, why should we not

sit comfortably, send for bards and minstrels and call upon them to employ their imagination and their torrential flow of words? If, however, we wish to emulate his virtues, we should think of them and take stock of our capacity to acquire them.

Dadabhai saw the poverty of India. He taught us that swaraj is the remedy for it. However, he left to us the task of seeking out the key to swaraj. The principal reason for exalting Dadabhai was his devotion to the country and he spent himself in it.

We know that the spinning-wheel is the chief means of winning swaraj. India's poverty is due to its peasants remaining idle for four to six months in a year. And, if this enforced idleness becomes a voluntary one, or in other words, we become habitually lazy, not only will this country not gain its freedom, but it will perish altogether. The spinning-wheel is the only way of getting rid of this idleness. Hence, all activities which encourage its use amount to an imitation of Dadabhai's virtues.

The spinning-wheel means khadi, it means the boycott of foreign cloth, it means sixty crores of rupees finding their way into the huts of the poor.

The spinning-wheel is the sole answer to the appeal for All-India Deshbandhu Memorial. Hence, collecting funds for this purpose on that day, is an excellent way of celebrating Dadabhai's centenary. People should, therefore, get together on that day and totally eschew foreign cloth, wear khadi made of hand-spun yarn alone, reaffirm their determination to spin every day for at least half an hour and collect funds for the spread of khadi. Those who grow cotton should keep with them at least the quantity that they require for their own use.

However, what of those who do not like to utter the word spinning-wheel? What solution can I offer for this? What suggestion can I offer to those who do not like the word swaraj for celebrating the centenary? Such persons should discover a path for themselves. My suggestion is for the people at large. It cannot be anything but this. It is a different matter altogether if someone searches for other virtues in Dadabhai and tries to imitate them. He has a right to celebrate this centenary in a different way. Or, if members of the Swaraj Party wish to do something special in cities, they should certainly do so. I can only refer to that which can be practised alike by villagers and city-dwellers, old men as well as children, women as well as men, Hindus as well as Muslims.

We should start making preparations today if we wish to celebrate the Dadabhai centenary in accordance with my sugges-

tion. We should start using the spinning-wheel today in view of that programme. We should start today producing khadi for that occasion and hold meetings at various places in which khadi alone may be seen and which would bring credit to us and the country.

ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

Signatures are still being taken on the circular appealing for funds for this memorial. Naturally, I am happy to have received the signature of the great Poet[1]. Let the reader too feel happy at this. I had specially sent him a message asking him to sign only if he had such faith in the spinning-wheel as was described in the circular. When it became clear to me that an all-India memorial could only be associated with the spinning-wheel and khadi, I expressed this idea to the Poet before doing so to anyone else. That was about three weeks before I wrote this article. He had readily agreed, even then, to sign such an appeal. Those who do not have faith in the spinning-wheel and khadi, or who believe that these should have no place in the memorial, are not at all urged to sign this appeal. Not only was there an insistence to get signatures from those who have faith, but the decision had also been taken that the memorial should not be associated with the spinning-wheel and khadi if those who were particular followers of Deshbandhu did not approve of the idea. Such a memorial was not to be insisted upon if all those whom we would ordinarily expect to sign this appeal did not unhesitatingly do so. I know that there is a difference of opinion as regards the usefulness of the spinning-wheel and khadi. To give it the place of prime importance in the memorial of a great leader like Deshbandhu would not perhaps be readily acceptable to many people. I, however, had to carry out my duty as the friend and colleague of Deshbandhu and, if I had to think separately in terms of an all-Bengal Memorial, I would certainly not have approved of a hospital. I have never recognized the need for a large number of hospitals. However, I have not even let the thought enter my mind as to what I would do if I had the freedom to decide. I had before me the trust-deed made out by Deshbandhu. It clearly showed me the path I had to take and I regarded it as my duty to make it the heart of the memorial if it met with the approval of his followers and I have now stayed on in Bengal for the sole purpose of collecting Rs. 10 lakhs for it. The trust-deed was made out a year ago. Nevertheless, I know that Deshbandhu continued to hold until his death the views expressed in it. This is be-

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

cause he had asked me to help collect money to pay off the mortgage on the building. It could be said that except me, perhaps, no one but his wife knows his views on the spinning-wheel and khadi towards the end of his life. I had acquainted myself with the views of Shrimati Basanti Devi before issuing this circular. Similarly, I had acquainted myself with the views of Deshbandhu's close friend and partner, Pandit Motilalji, and, later, those of his particular followers in Bengal. Only after having done so did I decide to draft the circular. I must admit this much that the work of this memorial is very close to my heart. Even though this is true, the reader must believe me when I say that I am unconcerned about its success. But this could not be said about the all-Bengal memorial. I am making ceaseless efforts to make a success of it. There are reasons for such a discrimination. My faith in the power of the spinning-wheel is inexhaustible despite the difference of opinion in this matter. Such a memorial cannot be established with limited resources. I would like to have an inexhaustible sum of money only if there is any power in the spinning-wheel and if India has genuine faith in it. Hence, Pandit Malaviyaji's signature has given me the same measure of satisfaction as the signature of the great Poet. I have suggested to Shri Jawaharlal Nehru to make an appeal for other signatures.

It has to be seen now what contribution Gujarat will make to this memorial. My expectations are that its contribution will be worthy of Gujarat and will add to the glory of the memorial.

I hope that the readers of *Navajivan* and lovers of khadi will contribute their mite without waiting for anyone to approach them in this matter. This will be acknowledged in *Navajivan*. This appeal is not only to readers of *Navajivan* in Gujarat or in India, but also to those who live abroad.

The Caste Situation

In Calcutta, I was taken to a gathering of our Marwari brothers. Matters relating to reforms in the caste alone were taken up and discussed. What kind of speech could I make at such a place? Instead of talking of reforms, I mainly put before them the principle of boycott. I was aware that the ostracism had taken on a terrible form amongst these people with the result that there was bitterness amongst them. I give here the substance of my speech,[1] as it is applicable to all Hindus.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVII, pp. 411-4.

The weapon of boycott is well used only by those individuals who are pure. Otherwise, it would take the form of pure violence and perhaps lead to the destruction of the one who uses it and even of the one against whom it is used.

Today, we are not worthy of practising boycott. Could there be any merit in treating as an outcaste a father who arranges for the remarriage of his daughter widowed at the age of ten and extending the same treatment to the daughter as well as the person who marries her? Do we boycott persons who are immoral, and openly licentious and who partake of meat and wine? What of those who are guilty of licentious thoughts? In other words, so long as we are not purified, who is fit to boycott whom? None of us is fit to do so.

Boycott results in the creation of new castes. What we call factions today will become castes tomorrow. Hence, in this age when castes are getting merged together, boycott is totally harmful.

Varnashrama[1] is a dharma; the existence of many castes is not. Protecting the former is desirable; destruction of the latter is equally desirable. Hence reformers deserve encouragement. Reform in this matter cannot be checked however much we try. This is because Hinduism is full of undesirable elements and there is an all-round awakening today.

The wise thing to do is to give reform the status of dharma. However, boycott is harmful even when the reform appears to be unacceptable.

The Marwari community is intelligent and brave. It has done good as well as harm to India. As a friend, it is my dharma to mention the latter also. May God spare it from this latter and bless it.

I would end this discussion of boycott by asking those against whom it is practised to exercise restraint and, through courtesy, put a stop to the spread of bitterness and also to persist for their part in what they think is right.

Discrimination in Charity

While praising the generosity of our Marwari brothers, I have suggested the need for discrimination in practising this virtue. Carnegie became a multi-millionaire. He was fond of establishing libraries indiscriminately; hence Scottish professors

[1] The division of society into four castes and of the individual's life into four *ashramas* or stages

warned him to be careful and suggested that it would be proper on his part to announce donations after consulting experts. Such advice is needed by all philanthropists and should be noted by them. There is no reason to believe that charity *per se* is meritorious. Our Marwari brothers are true protectors of the cow. Much of their wealth they use in that work. However, this is not always done with discrimination. If anyone can protect the cow, the Marwaris can, for they have courage. It is mainly a question of funds and business acumen. They possess both these requirements. If these are used with discretion, they can truly bring about cow-protection on a large scale.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-8-1925

8. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN THE CONGRESS

We have, very often, said in the *Navajivan* that civil disobedience may be practised not only towards those whom we regard as our enemies or those who regard us as enemies, but also towards those whom we regard as our friends or our elders. It is now time to apply this to the Congress. The constitutional changes which it is necessary to bring about are stated elsewhere in this issue. Ordinarily, however, the Congress Committee is not authorized to make these changes. They can be made only by amending the constitution. The Congress alone is authorized to amend it. This power is not vested in the Congress Committee. The latter would have to make use of its extraordinary powers in order to do so. The use of such powers may also be called "civil disobedience" of the law. Not only has every person and every organization the right to practise this if occasion arises, but it may become even their duty to do so. If we recognize the necessity of the reforms suggested by me, this is now our duty. This matter should certainly be discussed at the Congress session. The rule which permits the purchase of yarn to be contributed must be annulled because, not only has spinning gained nothing by it but, on the contrary, it has led to an increase in hypocrisy and falsehood. If the Congress Committee does not make this necessary change, it may be regarded as having failed in its duty, because the public will be wasting a few months. Perhaps, there would have been room for difference of opinion on this subject if Deshbandhu had not died and if Lord Birkenhead had not made his speech; but there is no such room left now. It may be that

some members of the Congress Committee do not accept the immediate necessity of making the change; in that case, they have no right to practise civil disobedience and, hence, I have stated that the Congress Committee can make such changes only by near, if not complete, unanimity.

The necessity of making such changes is not a sufficient ground for offering civil disobedience. Those against whom it is offered must also be benefited by it. This condition is wholly fulfilled in this case as the above changes are necessary only for the benefit of the Congress. The second condition is that those who practise such disobedience must bear no ill will. This is implied in its very name, as 'civility' is opposed to ill will. Moreover, how can there be any ill will when we only wish the Congress well? My purpose in writing this article is not to make anyone declare against his wishes that the constitution should indeed be changed. In this matter, too, all concerned should make use of their independent judgment. Those, too, who feel that changing the constitution in this manner by the Congress Committee would result in greater harm than good, they too should in duty oppose these changes being made by the Congress Committee, although they may accept the necessity for making them. Civil disobedience cannot—it should not—be practised because someone else asks us to do so. It should be practised only when it seems appropriate to us; then alone is it worth the name, then alone it is worth practising. This is because human beings do not have strength to do a thing about which they are themselves not convinced, and civil disobedience relies for its success solely on the strength of the individual.

The chief purpose of writing this article is to describe the circumstances in which civil disobedience may be practised. I regard myself as an expert on the subject, I regard it as my own independent discovery and, I look upon it as my dharma to show from time to time its applicability and its limitations. Not only am I totally unconcerned whether the changes are made or not but I regard them as harmful if everyone does not exercise his independent judgment. This criticism applies particularly to those who regard themselves as my followers. I do not approve of blind worship. I am very much opposed to it. Swaraj cannot be secured by it and, if secured, cannot be maintained. Hence I would like to get work out of my 'followers' so as to utilize also their intelligence. If we make the above changes intelligently and honestly practise them, I expect very good results to follow.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-8-1925

9. INTERVIEW WITH DR. H. W. B. MORENO

CALCUTTA,
August 4, 1925

Mr. Gandhi had recently said[1] at a public meeting of the Anglo-Indians that "the Anglo-Indians should not ape the Europeans", on the contrary, they should even keep to the Indian style of dress and should look at all things political from the Indian standpoint. Dr. Moreno questioned the value of such a statement. He said from their earliest childhood Anglo-Indians used the English style of dress and spoke the English language. Such were their traditions and they respected these traditions.

Mr. Gandhi in reply said that he had been misunderstood. What he wanted was that "the Anglo-Indians should not ape the Europeans". The Anglo-Indians had their distinctive mode of dress and so had the Mussalmans. He did not, however, refer to any particular mode of dress. He was conscious of the fact that Anglo-Indians lived according to certain European standards, but he deprecated Anglo-Indians keeping up a false appearance as Europeans, beyond their means, which led in most instances to bankruptcy. He referred especially to the bulk of the community who were far from being well off. He did not refer to those in the higher grades who had little or nothing in common with the community. He wanted Anglo-Indians to regard everything from the Indian viewpoint. Even if he were wrong in his suggestions, he left it to the community to decide for themselves, as they had the most intimate knowledge of their own condition.

Forward, 7-8-1925

10. SPEECH AT MEETING OF CHRISTIANS[2]

CALCUTTA,
August 4, 1925

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

You, Sir, have just said that probably this is for the first time I am privileged to address a meeting of Indian Christians only. If you refer to my present visit, you are perfectly correct. But if you refer or have referred to the whole of the time that I have

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVII, pp. 442-9.

[2] The meeting was held at the L. M. Institution. S. C. Mukerjee, M.L.C., presided.

been in India since my return from South Africa, then I have to inform you that I had such a privilege in 1915.[1] But my connection with Indian Christians dates back to 1893. That was the time when I went to South Africa and found myself in the midst of a large Christian Indian community. I was agreeably surprised to find so many young men and young women who, whilst they were devoted Christians, were equally devoted to the motherland, and it gave me greater pleasure when I discovered that most of the young men and young women had never seen India. The majority of them were born in Natal; some of them in Mauritius, because it was from Mauritius that the first batch of free Indian settlers found their way to South Africa. They were most of them children of indentured parents. Indentured Indians were those who had gone to work on the sugar estates of Natal under an indissoluble contract to work on those estates for at least five years and, as they had gone under this contract, otherwise called indenture, they were called Indentured Indians. Their state was described during his lifetime by the late Sir William Hunter as a state very near to slavery. I have mentioned this in order to show to you under what difficulties and disabilities these countrymen and countrywomen of ours laboured in South Africa and how they were able to overcome those difficulties, and, in the face of them, cut out for themselves honourable careers. Today, some of these men have even received a liberal education in England. Some of them are store-keepers, some of them occupying humbler walks of life. These brave lads offered their services to the Government at the time of the Boer War and the Zulu Rebellion. Some of them were brought up in my own home; two of them at least became barristers. So you understand what intimate relations I enjoyed with the Christian Indian community. I do not think there is in that land a single Indian Christian whom I do not know or who does not know me. It gives me, therefore, much pleasure to be able to come before you this evening to speak to you on "Brotherhood of Man".

It goes hard with people who have to suffer the disabilities that our countrymen, whom I have just now described to you, have to labour under, to understand that there can be any such thing as "Brotherhood of Man". If you are readers of newspapers and if you take any interest in what goes on outside the four corners of India, you may know that, today, in that South Africa an attempt is being made by the Government of the country

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIII, p. 63.

to drive away the Indians, or, as it has been well put by one of the newspapers here, English-owned, to starve them out of South Africa; and in this scheme of starvation are included some of these very men I have described to you. Whether ultimately this thing will come to pass, whether ultimately the Government of India will sanction or tolerate this thing, remains to be seen. But the connection in which I mention this thing to you is, as I have already told you, that it is difficult for such men to realize the meaning of brotherhood; and yet I have undertaken to speak to you on brotherhood at this time because it is in such times of stress and difficulty that one's spirit of brotherhood is really tested.

I receive compliments very often. They pass through my mind like water poured on to a duck's back. But you, Sir, have paid a compliment to me this evening which I feel inclined to accept. You think that if there is any person who has a right to speak on Brotherhood of Man, at least I should have that right, and I think so too. I have tried myself on many an occasion to find out whether it is possible for me to hate—I don't say love—my persecutor, and I must honestly but in all humility confess to you that I have not succeeded, I cannot recall a single occasion when I have felt constrained to hate a single human being. How I came to it I do not know. But I am simply giving to you a life-long practice and, therefore, it is really literally true that, if there is any person who has the right to speak on Brotherhood of Man, I at least have that right.

Brotherhood does not mean loving or sympathizing with those, extending the hand of fellowship to those who will in return love you. That is a bargain. Brotherhood is not a mercantile affair. And my philosophy, my religion teaches me that brotherhood is not confined merely to the human species; that is, if we really have imbibed the spirit of brotherhood, it extends to the lower animals. In one of the magazines issued in England by those great philanthropic societies 30 or 35 years ago, I remember having read some beautiful verses. I think the title of those verses was *My Brother Ox*. In them the writer beautifully described how on a man who loved his fellow men it was obligatory to love his fellow-animals also, taking the word animals to mean the sub-human species. The thought struck me most forcibly. At that time, I had learnt very little of Hinduism. All I knew about it was what I had imbibed from my surroundings, from my parents and others. But I realized the force of that writing. However, I do not intend today to dwell upon this broadest brotherhood. I shall confine myself to "Brotherhood of Man". I

have brought this thing in order to illustrate that our brotherhood is a mockery if we are not prepared to love even our enemies. In other words, one who has imbibed the spirit of brotherhood cannot possibly allow it to be said of him that he has any enemy at all. People may consider themselves to be our enemies, but we should reject any such claim. I have heard that claim made; that is the reason why I use the word 'claim'. The question then arises: how is it possible to love those who consider themselves to be our enemies? Almost every week, I receive letters either from Hindus or from Mussalmans, sometimes from Christians, combating this fundamental position that I have taken up. If it is a Hindu who writes, then he asks me, "How is it possible for me to love a Mussalman who kills the cow", which is dear to me as my life? Or if it is a Christian who writes to me, he asks, "How is it possible to love Hindus who so ill-treat those whom they call untouchables, Hindus who have suppressed a fifth of their own numbers?" And if it is a Mussalman who writes, he asks, "How is it possible to extend the hand of brotherhood or fellowship to Hindus who are worshippers of stock and stone?" I say to all these three: "Your brotherhood is of no value to me if you cannot love the respective parties that you have described." But what does the attitude signify after all? Does it not signify cowardly fear or intolerance? If all of us are God's creation, why should we fear one another or hate those who do not hold the same belief that we do? A Hindu will ask me, is he to sit or look on, while a Mussalman is doing something which is most repugnant to him? My brotherhood replies, "Yes". And I add, "You must sacrifice yourself, or in the language you have just listened to, you must bear the cross. If you want to defend one who is dear to you, you must die without killing." I have personal experience of such occurrences. If you have the courage to suffer lovingly, you melt the stoniest heart. You may raise your hand against one whom you regard as a ruffian, but how if he overpowers you? Will not the ruffian be more ferocious because of his victory over you? Does not history show that evil feeds on resistance? History also furnishes instances of men having tamed the fiercest men with their all-embracing love. But I admit that such non-resistance requires far greater courage than that of a soldier who returns two blows against one. I also admit that if a man has anger instead of love in him for the evil-doer, it is better for him to fight clean rather than, in a cowardly manner, to sit still for fear of dying. Cowardice and brotherhood are contradictory terms. I know that the world does not accept the fundamental

position that I have endeavoured to place before you. I know that in Christian Europe, this doctrine of non-retaliation is pooh-poohed. At the present moment, I am privileged to receive precious letters from friends all over Europe and America, some of them asking me to still further expound the doctrine of non-resistance. Some others are laughing at me and telling me: "It is all right for you to talk these things in India, but you dare not do so in Europe." Yet others tell me: "Our Christianity is a whitewash, we do not understand the message of Jesus, it has got to be still delivered to us, so that we can understand it." All these three positions are more or less right from the standpoint of the writers. But I venture to tell you that there is no peace for this world, and to take the name of brotherhood is a blasphemy, until we arrive at this fundamental position. Men there are who ask and so also women who ask: "Is it human to refrain from retaliation?" I say it is human. Up to now we have not realized our humanity, we have not realized our dignity; we are supposed to be, if Darwin is to be believed, the descendants of monkeys, and I am afraid that we have not yet shed our original state.

The late Dr. Anna Kingsford in one of her books wrote once: "As I walk about the streets of Paris, I seem to see before me diverse lions and snakes personified." She says these animals have only the human form but no more. Man, to realize his full stature, has to become absolutely fearless. This he will do not by being armed from head to foot, but by generating force from within. A Kshatriya is one who does not fly from danger, he is not one who strikes a blow for a blow. The *Mahabharata* says also that forgiveness is the quality of a brave man. There is a statue erected, I am told, in the memory of the late General Gordon. The sculptor does not put a sword in his hands, he puts only a stick. It is considered to be a beautiful work of art. If I was born a sculptor and I had the order, I would not have put even a stick in the hands of General Gordon, but I would have pictured him as one with folded arms, with his chest put forward, in all humility telling the world: "Come, all of you, who want to throw your darts, here is General Gordon to receive them without flinching, without retaliation." That is my ideal of a soldier. Such soldiers have lived on the earth. Christianity undoubtedly has given birth to such soldiers, and so has Hinduism, so has Islam. In my opinion, it is not true to say that Islam is a religion of the sword. History does not bear that out. But I am just now speaking to you of individual instances, and what is true of the individual can be true of nations or of groups of individuals; not

all at once, I admit, but in the process of evolution, when men after men live this truth in their lives before our very eyes, they cannot but affect us. Such is the history of Quakers. Such is the history of Dukhobors whom Tolstoy has described. I do not know how far the latter, after having gone to Canada, are carrying out their original resolution, but the fact stands that they have lived this life of non-resistance as a community. I, therefore, feel that we are trifling with that sacred name, Brotherhood of Man, unless and until we are ruled by this fundamental fact in life.

What I am just now combating is the position that is taken up by some of the finest writers in Europe and by some of the finest writers even in India: that man, as a class, will never be able to arrive at a stage when he can do without retaliation. I have a fundamental quarrel with that position. On the contrary, I say that man, as man, will not realize his full destiny, and his full dignity, until he has been so far educated as to be able to refrain from retaliation. Whether we like it or whether we do not like it, we are being driven to it. It would be to our credit if, instead of being driven to the position, we will take ourselves to it, and I have come here this evening to ask you to exercise this privilege, the privilege of voluntarily taking up this idea in practice. Indeed, I ought not to have to be speaking to a Christian audience on this, because some of my friends tell me that I am really a Christian, when I talk about non-retaliation. Little do they know that I have got to strive with the Christians, as I have to with Hindus and my Muslim friends. I do not know many Christians who have adopted this thing as a rule of their life. Some of the very best Christians that I know do not admit that this is the teaching of Christ. I do believe that it is the teaching of Christ. They say it was meant merely for his twelve disciples, not meant for the world, and they quote some passages from the New Testament in support of their contention. The opponents of non-violence as a rule of life say that it can only breed a race of cowards, and if India takes up this message of non-retaliation, she is a doomed country. On the contrary, the fundamental position that I place before you is, that unless India takes up this position, she is a doomed nation and with her all the nations of the world. India is a continent, and when India takes up the doctrine of force, as Europe today seems to have taken it up, then India becomes one of the exploiters of the weaker races of the world. Just imagine what it must mean to the world.

I call myself a nationalist and I pride myself in it. My nationalism is as broad as the universe. It includes in its sweep even the

lower animals. It includes in its sweep all the nations of the earth, and if I possibly could convince the whole of India of the truth of this message, then, India would be something to the whole world for which the world is longing. My nationalism includes the well-being of the whole world. I do not want my India to rise on the ashes of other nations. I do not want India to exploit a single human being. I want India to become strong in order that she can infect the other nations also with her strength. Not so with the other nations of the world, not so with a single nation in Europe today. They do not give strength to the others. We are not receiving any strength. It is in the nature of things impossible for them to do so, and that is why I have taken the uncompromising position that I cannot possibly be a party to a constitution whose basis is brute force.

President Wilson mentioned his beautiful 14 points, and do you know what he wound up with? He said: "After all, if this endeavour of ours to arrive at peace fails, we have got our armaments to fall back upon." I want to reverse that position, and I say: "Our armaments have failed already. Let us now be in search of something new, and let us try the force of love and God which is Truth." When we have got that, we shall want nothing else. There is the story of the devotee, Prahlad. It may be a fable, but no fable for me. He was a lad of hardly 12 years. His father asked him not to take the name of God. Prahlad said: "I can't do without it, it is my life." Then his father asked him: "Show me your God." A red hot iron pillar was shown to Prahlad and he was asked to embrace it. Yes, there was God in that pillar. Prahlad embraced it in love and faith. He was unhurt. If we would realize brotherhood, we must have the love and the faith and the truth of Prahlad in us.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-8-1925

11. NOTES

KERALA NOT DEAD

The new Secretary, Kerala Provincial Congress Committee, says that there are now 122 A class and 52 B class Congress members in Kerala and says, Kerala is not dead to the Congress call. I am glad to be able to publish this information. I trust that the work thus begun will continue unabated.

SAD END OF A PROMISING LIFE

Some time ago a serious-looking young Englishman named Harries announced himself with a note of introduction from Shuaib Qureshi. Without ceremony he at once told me that he had come to India for a short stay in pursuit of a philosophical research in company with an Indian fellow-student. He engaged me in a swift conversation, and allowed me to see that he did not require much argument from me to make my meaning clear. Though he took me through his examination with lightning speed, I saw that I could not satisfy his appetite in the few minutes that I could then give him. I promised him another appointment if he wanted it. He gratefully accepted the offer. Next time he came with his friend and fellow-worker Basanta Kumar Mullick. I was much taken up with Harries's earnestness, intelligence and honesty of mind. During the time at my disposal he could not finish his enquiry. I gave him promise of another appointment to which I was looking forward when I got the sad news that young Harries was no more. Here is a summary of a pathetic account of his death and life sent to me by his fellow-worker Basanta Kumar Mullick:

> Thomas Wilfred Harries, a young Englishman from Balliol (Oxford) came over, in the third week of June, to stay with me; but as luck would have it, he fell a victim to an attack of malaria before even July was half way through. He was only 24 when he died, and the attack lasted not even for full four days. The blow is still ringing in my head, as it ever will; and everybody who ever met him since he was out in India is mourning his death.
>
> There is no need, nor is it possible, to say what he was to me. Neither can I try and say at the moment what the loss means for his country or mine. Sooner or later it will be recognized and recorded. Let me only state as simply as I can some features of his career which

stand out prominently. T. W. Harries was a Balliol man, and it will not be exaggerating the truth to say that he was one of the most brilliant students Balliol produced in recent years. Except only in the 1st public examination of Oxford known as Hon. Mods, he never missed his first. In 1923, he was one of the few who sat for the 1st examination in Modern Greats, and he took a brilliant first in it. Since then he had been lecturing on Economics, History and Philosophy to the W.E.A., in the Potteries in the place of Towney where he was already one of the most popular and respected of teachers.

The object of his visit to India was as simple as his life was unostentatious and clean. He came out for a holiday and, what is more to the point, to finish the work which we had begun in Oxford some four or five years ago. There is a long history connected with this work, and this is not the place to relate it, but to show how Harries came to be associated with it, I have to mention that, after I had met him in a debate of the Lotus Club in the Oxford University of which he was the President, he, along with a few others who are all dear to me, joined me in a philosophical investigation which I had been carrying on for some years before. The aim of this investigation was to expound a new system of thought which rose straight out of the scepticism of the age. We had lost our faith in tradition long ago. Contemporary life to us, except when it managed to avoid vital issues, was as defunct as the existing institutions were long past the stage where they could yield any new order of peace or a fresh ideal of life. What seemed to be evident was that not before a more compact and a less warlike though more efficient order of human society had arisen, could there be any real peace or rest.

I tender my condolences to the friends and family of Harries. Noble ideas once conceived never perish, and Harries will live through his ideas. The unknown and humble plodders like Harries ever continue the work bequeathed by their departed co-workers. All honour to them!

Pariahs of the Empire

Lest we forget our status and proper place in the imperial economy, we receive a constant reminder now from England and now from South Africa, or some such place, of what we are. The Secretary of State for India puts us in mind of 'the sharp edge of the British sword'. The Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's forces in India gives it as his deliberate opinion that what we are aiming at is 'unattainable'. Mr. Malan, the Union Minister in South Africa tells us that there shall be no equality between Europeans and Indians, and that, therefore, if he will

not kill out the Indian settler, he will squeeze him out of South Africa and will reduce him to such a state that he cannot even think of equality. The ghetto is his proper place, and menial labour his proper sphere of action. We must be, and remain a suppressed class of the world. To mention this evil is not to get rid of it. 'No pariahs need apply' is the permanent signboard which is hung up in every Imperial Secretariat. What to do is the question. Pherozeshah Mehta disapproved even of my going to South Africa. He said that nothing was to be done in South Africa until we had vindicated our position in India. Lokamanya said much the same thing. 'Seek ye first swaraj and everything will be added unto you' was his refrain. But swaraj is a result of the sum-total of India's energy. The order of the day is work from without and work from within. It is a long-drawn-out agony, but there is no new birth without the necessary pains of labour. We must pass through this inevitable life-giving, life-sustaining discipline, fiery though it is. Our countrymen in South Africa must do the very best they can without flinching. If they have the old spirit of resistance and cohesion in them, and if they think that the moment has arrived, they must take up the cross of suffering. They must be sole judges of their fitness and of the psychological moment for taking the plunge. They must know that public opinion of India is with them. But they will also realize that it is an opinion which is powerless to help them. They must therefore rely upon their own strength and capacity for enduring hardships and in the innate justice of their cause.

A Political Sufferer

Here is a description of a political sufferer. He says:

> Will you help the poor and starving family of a political sufferer? You can easily gather lacs and lacs of rupees for our late revered leader Deshbandhu C. R. Das's memorial and you cannot help my poor family by giving me at least Rs. 5,000 for the maintenance of my family and for introducing in . . . village the charkhas. I am sure to get Rs. 2,000, if not Rs. 5,000, if you only speak but a single word to the revered[1] . . . You have written to me to take up weaving and earn Rs. 15 per month. I do not know weaving. Your formula is, no work, no food. Can you give me such work as will enable me to earn at least Rs. 100 per month? Can you not try for me a handsome job in the Corporation of Calcutta by asking the Deputy Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer?

[1] According to the source, there followed a string of names here.

This represents the mentality of the average youth. Thousands of young men have to be satisfied with Rs. 30 per month. But here this political sufferer wants at least Rs. 100 per month, or Rs. 2,000 at least in a lump sum. There is no connection between the two proposals. But they are made in all good faith in the expectation of acceptance. It is impossible to satisfy ambition such as this. The Corporation of Calcutta cannot be used as a medium for finding work for the unemployed. As a matter of fact, all the public departments and private offices are almost over-supplied. The remedy, therefore, lies, first, in modifying one's ambition to suit the poor environment of the country and, secondly, in finding new scope for employment. Artificial wants must be curtailed; evil social customs must be got rid of. The custom of one man supporting the rest of the members of a family, although they may be able to do their share of work, must go by the board. It is then possible to be satisfied with Rs. 30 per month. Many young men in Bengal have voluntarily rearranged their ideas, and are now living on Rs. 30 per month, whereas at one time they were earning even as much as four to five hundred per month. The only new source of employment which can give work to hundreds of young men and women is a well-organized khaddar service. I am hoping that the All-India Spinners' Association that I have in view will soon come into being. I am hoping also that the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial will receive an adequate response from the public. Let all honest men and women who are in search of employment qualify themselves by becoming expert carders and spinners, if not also weavers. They will not be called upon to earn their living by spinning and weaving, but they will be called upon to organize production and sale. But this organization will require on the part of the organizers an accurate knowledge of the art of carding and spinning, and all the processes which cotton has to undergo before it becomes weavable yarn.

Intimidation in Public Life

A correspondent from the South writes:[1]

If the report is true, and it appears to me to be quite authentic, and if it is also true that rowdyism of the type referred to by the correspondent is at all general, it is a most regrettable thing.

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, cited the instance of a co-worker having been manhandled for having complained to the Press, and observed that "intimidation is threatening to become the rule in settling political differences and disputed personal loyalties."

It consolidates the very power against which both the rowdies and we are endeavouring to fight. I have the names and full addresses of the parties and I have no doubt that those who know will have no difficulty in dotting the 'i's and crossing the 't's. But my purpose is not to expose the evil-doers. I want to expose the wrong that they are doing, in the hope that it might not be repeated. Those who are in charge of affairs should courageously deal with the evil and nip it in the bud.

WREATH OR GARLAND?

I have observed in many parts of India but in Bengal especially the custom of garlanding guests with wreaths instead of a beautiful *bona-fide* swadeshi *mala*. I suppose it is considered more dignified to offer wreaths because they are much more expensive than the *malas*—garlands. Wreaths are an importation from the West. So far as I am aware they are used for decorating coffins. The flowers are held together with a wire which often hurts. I am one of such individuals who have been hurt by the wires of wreaths which have been forced upon me by overzealous admirers. It is difficult to carry a wreath in one's hand for fear of getting hurt. A wreath being stiff instead of adorning the body, in my opinion, disfigures it. Whereas a *mala* strung together beautifully on a piece of string hangs loosely round the neck and causes no discomfort. Will Reception Committees please note?

Young India, 6-8-1925

12. DO I HATE ENGLISHMEN?

Some esteemed English friends have taken exception to the italicized sentence in the following extract from my article "The Science of Surrender" in *Young India*, dated the 9th July, 1925.[1]

> I make bold to say that without mutual surrender there is no hope for this distraught country. Let us not be hyper-sensitive or devoid of imagination. To surrender is not to confer favour. Justice that love gives is a surrender, justice that law gives is a punishment. What a lover gives trascends justice. And yet it is always less than he wishes to give, because he is anxious to give more and frets that he has nothing left. *It is libellous to say that Hindus act like Englishmen*; *Hindus cannot even if they would*, and this I say in spite of the brutality of the labourers of Kidderpore. Both Hindus and Mussalmans sail in the same boat. Both are fallen. And they are in the position of lovers, have to be, whether they will or no.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVII, pp. 348-50.

The friends think that, in writing that sentence, I have done a grave injustice to Englishmen, for they say that the implied censure applies to *all* Englishmen. I feel sorry that there could be any such interpretation possible regarding the passage. I had never intended it. I assure the friends that such was not my meaning. The context makes it clear that my remarks are not applicable to Englishmen as a whole. They could not, for instance, apply to C. F. Andrews who has utterly effaced himself for the sake of India.

The Mussalman charge was that the Hindus were trying to suppress and enslave them even as Englishmen had done with both Hindus and Mussalmans—meaning, necessarily, the majority of Hindus and Englishmen. In the extract quoted my endeavour was to show that Hindus had not the power even if they had the desire, to suppress Mussalmans. The friends do not object to my statement if it applies to Englishmen as a class in India, —not that they endorse my opinion even to that extent, but they could not be shocked as they had known me to hold that opinion for many years. But they were shocked because they thought that I had included in the condemnation all Englishmen, including the three friends who were honestly trying to serve India to the best of their ability. They thought that the passage was written in hatred and anger. As a matter of fact, there was neither hatred nor anger at the time I wrote the passage, and if the passage bears the meaning, which I still hold it does not, I can only plead my ignorance of the English language which is not my mother-tongue and whose intricacies, I own, I have not mastered. I hold myself to be incapable of hating any being on earth. By a long course of prayerful discipline, I have ceased for over forty years to hate anybody. I know that this is a big claim. Nevertheless, I make it in all humility. But I can and I do hate evil wherever it exists. I hate the system of Government that the British people have set up in India. I hate the domineering manner of Englishmen as a class in India. I hate the ruthless exploitation of India even as I hate from the bottom of my heart the hideous system of untouchability for which millions of Hindus have made themselves responsible. But I do not hate the domineering Englishmen as I refuse to hate the domineering Hindus. I seek to reform them in all the loving ways that are open to me. My non-co-operation has its root not in hatred, but in love. My personal religion peremptorily forbids me to hate anybody. I learnt this simple yet grand doctrine when I was twelve years old, through a school book, and the conviction has

persisted up to now. It is daily growing on me. It is a burning passion with me. I beg therefore to assure every Englishman, who like these friends might have misunderstood me, that I shall never be guilty of hating Englishmen even though I might have to fight them fiercely, even as I did in 1921. It will be a non-violent fight, it will be clean, it will be truthful.

Mine is not an exclusive love. I cannot love Mussalmans or Hindus and hate Englishmen. For, if I merely love Hindus and Mussalmans because their ways are on the whole pleasing to me, I shall soon begin to hate them when their ways displease me, as they may well do any moment. A love that is based on the goodness of those whom you love is a mercenary affair, whereas, true love is self-effacing and demands no consideration. It is like that of a model Hindu wife, Sita, for instance, who loved her Rama even whilst he bid her pass through a raging fire. It was well with Sita, for she knew what she was doing. She sacrificed herself out of her strength, not out of her weakness. Love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable.

Young India, 6-8-1925

13. SNARES OF SATAN

The following extract from a letter of a passionate lover of khaddar will be read with interest:

> I believe in khaddar. I see the mission of khaddar clear as crystal. It simplifies and hence purifies life. It binds us to the poor by the tie of service. It is the only insurance against poverty which is killing the body and the soul of the nation, for at least as far as the illiterate millions are concerned there is no question of the soul without the body. Realized Yoga and its votaries might talk of it, but for the millions soul is mockery without body. Last and not least, charkha is the only insurance against violent social outbreaks as are now flooding Europe with blood and passions. Charkha brings the masses and the classes together and as long as India accepts it Bolshevism and kindred violent eruptions would be impossible. These things convince me of the vital need of the charkha. But there is only one difficulty. Can it work? Can it succeed? Can we now plant again the charkha in its old place of sanctity in every home? Is it not too late? Before you went to prison I never would have questioned thus. There was room for hope. But now it is not all hope. And there is Bertrand Russell who says that indus-

> trialism is like a force of nature and India, too, will be submerged whether we want it or no. Only such people say we should find our own solution for industrialism. There is truth in what they say. Industrialism is flooding all the world and, after the flood, they are finding their own solutions. Take Europe. I do not believe that Europe will perish. I have too much faith in human nature and human nature will find the remedy sooner or later. Can India, even if she wants to, isolate herself and get out of the clutches of industrialism?

The argument to which this lover of khaddar has been involuntarily and irresistibly drawn is Satan's old device. He always goes with us half way, and then suddenly insinuates that it is no good going further and points to the seeming impossibility of further progress. He applauds virtue, but immediately says that it is not given to man to attain it.

Now, the difficulty that has occurred to the friend is a difficulty that faces a reformer at every step. Have not untruth and hypocrisy permeated society? Yet those who believe in the ultimate triumph of truth, persist in it in the absolute hope of success. A reformer never permits time to run against him, for he defies that ancient enemy. Of course, industrialism is like a force of Nature, but it is given to man to control Nature and to conquer her forces. His dignity demands from him resolution in the face of overwhelming odds. Our daily life is such a conquest. An agriculturist knows it only too well.

What is industrialism but a control of the majority by a small minority? There is nothing attractive about it, nor is there anything inevitable in it. If the majority simply wills to say 'no' to the blandishments of the minority, the latter is powerless for mischief.

It is good to have faith in human nature. I live because I have that faith. But that faith does not blind me to the fact of history that, whilst in the ultimate all is well, individuals and groups called nations have before now perished. Rome, Greece, Babylon, Egypt and many others are a standing testimony in proof of the fact that nations have perished before now because of their misdeeds. What may be hoped for is that Europe, on account of her fine and scientific intellect, will realize the obvious and retrace her steps, and from the demoralizing industrialism she will find a way out. It will not necessarily be a return to the old absolute simplicity. But it will have to be a reorganization in which village life will predominate, and in which brute and material force will be subordinated to the spiritual force.

Lastly, we must not be entrapped by false analogies. European writers are handicapped for want of experience and accurate information. They cannot guide us beyond a certain measure if they have to generalize from European examples which cannot be on all fours with Indian conditions, because in Europe they have nothing like the conditions of India, not even excluding Russia. What may be, therefore, true of Europe is not necessarily true of India. We know, too, that each nation has its own characteristics and individuality. India has her own; and if we are to find out a true solution for her many ills, we shall have to take all the idiosyncrasies of her constitution into account, and then prescribe a remedy. I claim that to industrialize India in the same sense as Europe is to attempt the impossible. India has stood many a storm. Each has left its own indelible mark it is true, but she has hitherto dauntlessly maintained her individuality. India is one of the few nations of the earth which have witnessed the fall of many civilizations, herself remaining scatheless. India is one of the few nations on the earth which have retained some of their ancient institutions although they have been overlaid with superstition and error. But she has hitherto shown an inherent capacity for purging herself of error and superstition. My faith in her ability to solve the economic problem that faces her millions has never been so bright as it is today, especially after my study of the conditions in Bengal.

Young India, 6-8-1925

14. TEACHERS' CONDITION

A deputation from the All-Bengal Teachers' Association waited upon me some time ago and asked me to advise them how they could better their condition and be of service to the country. They admitted that, at the present moment, they were not doing much good to the country. This is how they described their condition:

> The teachers are now engaged in performing a thankless task under a heavy personal sacrifice. They are imparting an education which is unprofitable and uninteresting through no fault of their own. They are to mechanically follow a curriculum of studies which provides for no religious, moral and vocational training. The education given today in Bengal through nearly 900 schools and by 20,000 teachers is domineered over by an examination system which only encourages cramming. The

> teachers are looked down upon as they are miserably underpaid. There is a large number of cases of mutual distrust and lack of sympathy between the teachers and the school authorities as well as the guardians. Education does not provide for physical training and is imparted through the foreign medium, resulting in a huge waste of national energy.

To all this the teachers might have added that the pupils are devitalized and have lost all initiative. I gave them an answer which satisfied them for the time being, but they took from me a promise that I would deal with the problem in these pages.

In my opinion, the root of the evil lies in the foreign domination, and the root of foreign domination lies in ourselves. I am aware that we shall never deal with these problems unless and until we deal with the root evil. If we had our own government, the teachers would be able to vindicate their position. Having our own government means a government never strong enough to override by force of arms the wishes of the majority, in other words, a government responsible to public opinion. Today the teachers have public opinion behind them in many things, but it is helpless against a power that is armed for dealing with any possible physical combination on the part of the people of India. No government in the world is so irresponsible and so unresponsive to the opinion of the millions of men and women of India as the Government of India. It was the realization of this fact that made Gokhale postpone everything else to the effort for winning self-government. Lokamanya was so impatient that he made his formula, "Swaraj is my birthright", ring from one end of India to the other. He suppressed his taste for scholarship and philosophy in favour of swaraj. Deshbandhu laid down his life in the same pursuit. All those who are like the teachers have, therefore, no remedy for their disease save that of gaining swaraj as quickly as possible. How is that to be attained. I have pointed out the remedy and the country is supposed to have adopted it. The only change is that to the effort within must be added the effort without, viz., entry into the legislatures. The teachers cannot enter these institutions, they cannot take part in active politics, but they can all spin or, if they like, do some other labour. They must not expect their pupils to labour, if the teachers will not labour themselves and I have suggested spinning because all can be engaged in it, not for private profit, but for discipline and national profit. Self-government means continuous effort to be independent of government control, whether it is foreign government or whether it is national. Swaraj government will be a sorry affair if people look up to it for

the regulation of every detail of life. Do the teachers realize that the pupils are an exaggerated edition of what they themselves are? If they will have the initiative, the pupils will soon begin to have it. The examination system, as it is, becomes doubly oppressive by reason of the mechanical method of instruction. Only the other day, inspecting a school, I asked a boy to tell me what and where Pataliputra—about which he had read to me from his book—was. He could not tell. This was neither the fault of the Government nor the pupils, assuredly the teachers'. Teachers can, if they will, make their tuition interesting and effective in spite of the deadening weight of the examination system. In spite of the medium of instruction being the English language in the higher classes, it is open to the teachers to take care of the mother tongue of the boys under them. There is no rule preventing them talking to the boys in their mother tongues. The fact is that most teachers do not know the vernacular names for technical expressions and find it difficult to make themselves intelligible in the vernacular when the subject of their discourse is technical. We have got into the very slovenly habit, in order, as we fancy to give point to our conversations, of using English adjectives, adverbs and even phrases of the English language. If the teachers wish it, many of the defects of the present system could be cured by them.

I have given only a few out of many possible illustrations of what can be done under the present system. It was my recognition of the evil of the system that made me conceive non-co-operation, but a revival of it just now seems to be almost an impossibility. I am, therefore, recommending what is, in some respects, more difficult of accomplishment. It is easier for the average man to run away from evil than remain in it and still remain unaffected by it. Many men can shun grog-shops and remain teetotallers, but not many can remain in these pestilential places and avoid the contagion.

However, the teachers have asked for advice and I can but place it before them so that each may then respond to the best of his ability. The unfortunate position is that educated Indians take to teaching not for the love of it, but because they have nothing better and nothing else for giving them a livelihood. Many of them even enter the teaching profession with a view to preparing for what they regard as a better thing. The wonder is that in spite of this self-imposed initial handicap so many teachers are not worse than they are. By well-ordered agitation, no doubt, they may better their pecuniary prospects, but I see no chance

even under a swaraj government of the scale of salary being raised much higher than it is today. I believe in the ancient idea of teachers teaching for the love of it and receiving the barest maintenance. The Roman Catholics have retained that idea and they are responsible for some of the best educational institutions in the world. The *rishis* of old did even better. They made their pupils members of their families, but in those days that class of teaching which they imparted was not intended for the masses. They simply brought up a race of real teachers of mankind in India. The masses got their training in their homes and in their hereditary occupations. It was a good enough ideal for those times. Circumstances have now changed. There is a general insistent demand for literary training. The masses claim the same attention as the classes. How far it is possible and beneficial to mankind generally cannot be discussed here. There is nothing inherently wrong in the desire for learning. If it is directed in a healthy channel it can only do good. Without, therefore, stopping to devise means for avoiding the inevitable, we must make the best use possible of it. Thousands of teachers cannot be had for the asking, nor will they live by begging. They must have a salary guaranteed, and as we shall require quite an army of teachers their remuneration cannot be in proportion to the intrinsic worth of their calling but it will have to be in proportion to the capacity of the nation for payment. We may expect a steady rise as we realize the relative merits of the different callings. The rise must be painfully slow. There must, therefore, arise a class of men and women in India who will from patriotic motives choose teaching as a profession, irrespective of the material gain that it may bring them. Then the nation will not underrate the calling of the teacher. On the contrary, it will give the first place in its affection to these self-sacrificing men and women. And so we come to this that, as our swaraj is possible largely by our own efforts, so is the teachers' rise possible mainly by their own effort. They must bravely and patiently cut their way through to success.

Young India, 6-8-1925

15. ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

The readers will share with me the pleasure to know that Pandit Malviyaji has signed the appeal[1] for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial published last week. Several others who are likely to endorse the appeal have been approached. At the time of writing this note, their replies have not been received. It has been a delicate matter to decide who should be approached, because of the object of the Memorial on which there is room for difference of opinion. I, therefore, hereby give a general invitation for signing to those who revere the memory of Deshbandhu and who believe in the potency of spinning-wheel and khaddar, to the extent defined in the appeal which I recopy below.

Supplement to *Young India*, 6-8-1925

16. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

AZIMGANJ,
Thursday [August 6, 1925][2]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your two letters. I write this letter from Azimganj. Manilal[3] has brought me here for making collections for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Tomorrow, i.e., on Friday, I reach Calcutta; and from there I shall proceed to Jamshedpur the same day. I shall stay in Jamshedpur on Saturday and Sunday and return to Calcutta on Monday morning. For the time being I am leaving Mahadev in Calcutta for making collections. On account of his illness Kristodas is staying at the Abhaya Ashram, Comilla. Jamnadas[4] has gone to Santiniketan and will reach Calcutta on Monday. Take care of your health. What to say about Kashi[5]? Ask Prabhudas[6] to write to me about his mental and physical condition.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVII, pp. 400-f.

[2] The date of receipt as given by the addressee is *Shravana Vad* 6, 1981, that is, August 10. The Thursday preceding it was August 6.

[3] Manilal Vallabhji Kothari, a political worker of Gujarat

[4] Addressee's brother

[5] Addressee's wife

[6] Addressee's son

I get letters from Lakshmi. If she wants to come to me let me know.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6194. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

17. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Shravana Vad 2 [August 6, 1925][1]

CHI. MANI,

I had your letter as well as Dahyabhai's. I had asked Mahadev to send a reply immediately to Dahyabhai's letter. I hope it has reached him. Dahyabhai had not answered the question put to him. If Dahyabhai wishes to study surgery there are enough facilities here as well as in Calcutta. These Colleges have nothing to do with the Government.

Since Manilal has sent you twelve bangles I believe you do not need any more for the present. But remember that if these bangles break frequently, they would prove costly. Even silver ones would be cheaper or those prepared from cotton yarn. These can be so knitted that they are thick, strong and always washable. But we will think more on this when we meet. Meanwhile you have a good stock with you.

Nothing is definite about my going there. Perhaps I may go over to Ahmedabad in October for a day or two.

Since you have bought a bicycle, you should use it for exercise.

We are in Murshidabad district today. Manilal too is here.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN
C/O VALLABHBHAI ZAVERBHAI PATEL, BARRISTER
KHAMASA CHOWKI
AHMEDABAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, pp. 27-8

[1] From the source

18. SPEECH AT KRISHNATH COLLEGE, BEHRAMPUR[1]

August 6, 1925

MAHARAJA SAHIB, FRIENDS AND FELLOW STUDENTS,

I address you as fellow students because I regard myself as a student, 56 years though I am. The more I live on this earth, the more I realize how much I have yet to learn and possibly how much I have yet to unlearn. It gives me great pleasure to meet you this afternoon. It is a double pleasure. I always seek an opportunity of meeting the student world all over India. It was, therefore, a pleasure to find this function amongst the various functions arranged by the Reception Committee, but the knowledge that this College is associated with one of the magnificent charities of the Maharaja Bahadur was an additional pleasure when I understood what this College was. I have known his great charities since 1915, when I had the honour of coming in contact with the Maharaja Bahadur, but I never realized till I came here what was the quantity of these charities. I understand from reliable sources that they amount to more than one crore of rupees. I had flattered myself with the belief that my Parsi friends beat everyone on the face of the earth in their charities, and I suppose, now, that statement will stand unchallenged so far as the whole community is concerned; but so far as individuals are concerned, I do not recollect a single Parsi name that has exceeded the charities of Cossimbazar. As I told you, therefore, it is a double pleasure for me to meet you this afternoon.

I thank you for the purse that you have presented towards the Deshbandhu Memorial. You know better than I do how much the student world is indebted to Deshbandhu not merely because he was one of their patrons, not merely because the students found his purse open for them, but also because his advice was always at the disposal of students, and he has left to the student world a legacy of self-sacrifice and devotion to the motherland which is not to be surpassed by anybody, if it can be at all equalled. It is, therefore, nothing out of the way that you

[1] Gandhiji visited the Krishnath College on August 6, where he was presented with an address and a purse of Rs. 1,067 for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Gandhiji's reply was recorded in shorthand and reproduced as an appendix in the College Commemoration Volume.

have given this good purse for this memorial and I hope that students all over Bengal will follow your noble example.

You have asked me to answer certain questions which you have put to me. I have understood these questions. I have not given myself much time to speak to you this afternoon, but before I come to these questions, I want to talk to you of things that are much more permanent for students and, therefore, of much greater importance than even the important questions that you have put to me. Throughout my travels in the world and my association with students and my experience as an amateur teacher of youth and of girls, I have come to the conclusion that the literary knowledge that a schoolmaster or a professor gives is by no means composed of what he has to give. You are not to be judged by the excellence of your pronunciation or by the excellence of your grammar, not even by the excellence of your eloquence; for that matter you might have never come to colleges, and yet it is possible for you to give a good account of yourselves to the world, it is possible for you to live a decent life as citizens of India—as citizens of the world. What you come to schools and colleges for is essentially to build your character. The highest ideal that can possibly be conceived for the student life has been placed before us by our Hindu ancestors, the great *rishis* of old. They likened the life of a student to that of a sannyasi, and they have laid down laws for the guidance of students just as rigorous as those they have laid down for the fourth ashrama, the fourth stage—the stage of a sannyasi. What a sannyasi is expected to do after a full experience of the world, out of the fullness of his knowledge, a student is voluntarily expected to do because of tradition, because of regard for his spiritual and for his worldly preceptors. You know the distinction between worldly knowledge and divine knowledge. They used worldly ambition and worldly knowledge also for the uplift of the soul, and even whilst they discoursed on matters of the world, they gave us a secret knowledge of the soul. Anyone who has studied the glorious Upanishads will be able, without the slightest hesitation, to corroborate what I am just now telling you. Ask yourselves then, "Are you leading the life of a sannyasi, are you—all of you—*brahmacharis*?"

Throughout my travels in Bengal I have heard a lot about the students of Bengal. I have heard something to your credit, I have also heard something to your discredit. I have been told that the life of the average student in Bengal, if not throughout India, is not particularly pure. He spends his time not in reading

the purest literature, but he even devotes his spare hours to reading magazines which should never find a place in a decent library or in a gentleman's drawing-room. I do not know how far this is true. But what I have told, I have received from men of knowledge, from men of culture, from men who have passed from those colleges. Some of them have declared to me that such is the life of the students of Bengal. They have told me that there is a general but sure deterioration in character. I hope this is not a proper and truthful generalization and that the average student is not so bad as he is made out to be. I recall to myself a story told by a Hindu widow, some weeks ago, with tears in her eyes. She has several daughters, some of whom are not yet married. She asked me what she was to do with her daughters. They are all educated. She is not sparing herself in order to give her daughters a decent education. I asked her what the ages of these daughters were. In my opinion they are not yet fit to be married. The mother said, "How can I help marrying my girls? Can you show me a place where I can hide them, where I can consider that my girls will be in safety?" She said, "You do not know the young men of Bengal, you do not know how dangerous it is for young girls to walk about unprotected; they are not free from the lustful eyes of students who walk about the streets of Calcutta." Can this be true? I hope it is not. But that widowed mother is not an illiterate woman. Let me tell you she is a great Congress worker; she spoke from knowledge, she spoke from the bitterness of her own experience and she said, "You may ask anybody you like, and you will find that, in general, my remarks will be corroborated by the parents in Bengal."

I have read only lately a paragraph in newspapers that a girl—I forget her name—committed suicide. I am not talking to you about Snehalata of sacred memory, but I am talking to you of a girl who has recently committed suicide. She is supposed to have committed suicide because her father could not find a suitable match for his daughter. Why? Because, as the newspapers relate, a frightful sum was asked by young men who were approached by the parents. Is marriage a matter of money, is it a bargain or is it a sacred institution? Is it a matter of love or is it a matter of commerce? What have we learnt in our colleges and schools? If this is true, as it seems to me to be true, the responsibility for the death of the girl lies upon the heads of the students of Bengal. If it is true it is for everyone of you to correct that evil. Let us not talk of swaraj, let us not talk of liberty of India, so long as the liberty of a single girl in Bengal is im-

perilled, so long as a girl finds it necessary to commit suicide because her parents have not got money enough to buy a suitable match. Let this blot be removed from the face of Bengal and let the students of Bengal be worthy of the charity of Cossimbazar. Let the students prove to the world, let them prove to the parents of Bengal that the honour of every girl in Bengal is as sacred in their hands as it is sacred or should be in the hands of her parents; and unless we learn this primary lesson I feel that we have lived in vain, that the students have lived in vain in Bengal, and all this money that is being spent upon them in giving them a liberal education, in housing them in magnificent buildings, is a waste of effort and waste of money. May God give you strength and the wisdom to understand the substance of what I am telling you. Do not criticize it, do not talk high of it, but say to yourselves how far the information given to me is likely to be correct. But if it is an overstatement, it is still damning enough for the student world. If it is true of several hundreds of students, I ask you to regard it as a dangerous thing. It is an eyesore, it is a canker that is eating into the very vitals of society, and that kind of evil will spread throughout the length and breadth of Bengal, if it is not nipped in the bud. Therefore, without criticizing my remarks to you and trying to measure the truth of it in golden scales, take the substance of it and make the best use, what every one of you can, of what I have said.

The *rishis* of old tell us that the education of a student begins not with literature. Do you know what the student in the Vedic times was called upon to do when he went to the teachers? Not to pass any examination in letters. He had to go before the *rishis* with *samid khand*—with a bundle of wood—in his hand. What did that signify? It signified purity of heart, sincerity of heart. It signified determination on the part of the student to labour for his preceptor, so that he could get from his preceptor what he deserved. He was not to ask any questions; he was to take what the preceptor gave him. If you are satisfied with learning by heart brilliant passages from Shakespeare and Milton, I do not grudge you that. But it must be added to something that is more substantial. You must build upon a stable foundation—you must build, therefore, upon a foundation of absolute truth—you must build upon a foundation of absolute love and non-violence. It is obligatory upon every student to observe these fundamental maxims of life. You know what the *Mahabharata* taught us about the value of truth. He said,

died! Do you know that in the Punjab the majority of weavers have either become butchers or worse, because they have become soldiers who shot the innocent Chinese in Shanghai and who shot innocent men in Turkey and in all parts of the world? What is this the weavers of the Punjab have been reduced to? There is nothing wrong in becoming soldiers, in becoming butchers. I say it is wrong giving up their honourable calling as weavers. It is a sin for which you and I are responsible. Hence I tell you, the real economics for you are that you should wear khaddar. You should spin and spin. Spin in order to make khaddar cheap. That is discipline for you. It will enable you to create your purity. Sit at the spinning-wheel calmly for half an hour and watch the transformation of your heart. I can quote to you instances of many men and women, of brilliant administrators, one of whom was a member in the Bombay Executive Council. He is as old as I am. He learnt spinning only a few months ago. He said: "After I began spinning at the wheel, I have somewhat got rid of my insomnia. I returned from office tired, sometimes at mid-night and, then, I was dozing, thinking of many problems which I did not want to think of. Now I sit at the spinning-wheel and spin away. Immediately comes the all-refreshing sleep—the sleep of innocence." Find out for yourselves what it can do. Find out what it cannot do.

You want excitement? Excitement for a *brahmachari* is forbidden. In the student life you must steel your hearts against all excitement. Life itself is excitement enough for you. You will find all that excitement when you become a householder. But today you do not want excitement. You want calmness of mind. Read the last 20 verses of the second chapter of the *Gita* and read side by side Wordsworth's description of a soldier. Find the common factor between the two. Study that and you won't need ask any questions at all.

I hope I have answered all your questions. If you want to know anything more, write to me and I shall reply to you at the earliest opportunity consistent with my other engagements.

I cannot convince you, God alone can convince you. I can only strive, I can pray for you.

May God help you to be what you ought to be.

Krishnath College Centenary Commemoration Volume, pp. 91 & 100-5

19. *INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS*

August 7, 1925

I have just returned from Sir Surendra Nath's home[1] and, when I tell you that I was expecting next Friday to be able to pay my second and promised visit and to enjoy a pleasant and instructive conversation with him, you can imagine with what sadness I must have gone there to pay the visit of condolence. The grief of the womenfolk whom I was privileged to see was unbearable. But Sir Surendra Nath has left a much larger family to mourn over his death than the blood relations whom I saw. Let that thought be a comfort to the bereaved family.

He was at one time the supreme idol of Bengal, if not of the nation. As a young man, during the Congress session of 1901[2], which I attended from far-off South Africa, I could see what influence he exerted in Congress deliberations and how nothing could go on without this seasoned soldier. He was one of the makers of Modern India, and if not the originator, certainly one of the originators of the National Congress. I am certain that, when all the strife is over and when we have come to our own, the services of Sir Surendra Nath will be remembered by his countrymen as much as those of any of the patriots who today rule the heart of India. In his own time Sir Surendra Nath was unsurpassed, and I know that, in spite of later differences, some of them fundamental, a grateful country will always cherish the memory of the late patriot who served India not for a few years, but for over a generation. He began when many of us were not even born, and never left the reins.

Forward, 8-8-1925

[1] Accompanied by C. F. Andrews and Jamnalal Bajaj, Gandhiji had visited Barrackpore in the morning on his visit of condolence.

[2] *Vide* Vol. III, pp. 213-5.

20. SPEECH AT INDIAN ASSOCIATION, JAMSHEDPUR[1]

[*August 8, 1925*]

I have great pleasure in being able to visit these great steel works. I have been thinking of coming to this place ever since 1917, the year in which I was trying to serve the Champaran agriculturists. It was then that Sir Edward Gait told me that I ought not to leave Bihar without having seen these works. But man proposes and God disposes and with me God had disposed otherwise. I made many attempts to see this place.[2]

As you know I am a labourer myself, I pride myself on calling myself a scavenger, weaver, spinner, farmer and what not, and I do not feel ashamed that some of these things I know but indifferently. It is a pleasure to me to identify myself with the labouring classes, because without labour we can do nothing. There is a great Latin saying of which the meaning is 'to labour is to pray', and one of the finest writers of Europe has said that a man is not entitled to eat unless he labours, and by labour he does not mean labour with the intellect, but labour with the hands. The same thought runs throughout Hindu religion. 'He who eats without labour eats sin, is verily a thief.' This is the literal meaning of a verse in *Bhagavad Gita*. I therefore pride myself on the fact that I can identify myself with labour throughout the world.

It was my ambition to see one of the greatest—if not the greatest—Indian enterprises in India, and study the conditions of work there. But none of my activities is one-sided, and as my religion begins and ends with truth and non-violence, my identification with labour does not conflict with my friendship with capital. And believe me, throughout my public service of 35 years, though I have been obliged to range myself seemingly against capital, capitalists have in the end regarded me as their true friend. And in all humility I may say that I have come here also as a friend of the capitalists—a friend of the Tatas. And here it would be ungrateful on my part if I do not give you a little anecdote about how my connection with the Tatas began. In South Africa, when

[1] Gandhiji was given an at-home in the evening and addressed a gathering of Indians and Europeans.

[2] This paragraph is taken from the report of the speech in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 14-8-1925.

I was struggling along with the Indians there in the attempt to retain our self-respect and to vindicate our status, it was the late Sir Ratan Tata who first came forward with assistance. He wrote me a great letter and sent a princely donation,—a cheque for Rs. 25,000 and a promise in the letter to send more, if necessary. Ever since I have a vivid recollection of my relations with the Tatas and you can well imagine how pleasurable it has been for me to be with you, and you will believe me when I say that, when I part company with you tomorrow, I shall do so with a heavy heart, because I shall have to go away without having seen so many things, for it would be presumption on my part to say at the end of two days that I had really studied things here. I know well enough the magnitude of the task before one who wants to study this great enterprise.

I wish to this great Indian firm all the prosperity that it deserves and to this great enterprise every success. And may I hope that the relations between this great house and labourers who work here under their care will be of the friendliest character? At Ahmedabad I have had much to do with the capitalists and workmen, and I have always said that my ideal is that capital and labour should supplement and help each other. They should be a great family living in unity and harmony, capital not only looking to the material welfare of the labourers but their moral welfare also,—capitalists being trustees for the welfare of the labouring classes under them.

I am told that though so many Europeans and Indians live here, their relations are of a happy character. I hope the information is literally true. It is the privilege of both of you to be associated in this great enterprise and it is possible for you to give India an object-lesson in amity and goodwill. You will, I hope, have best relations with one another not only under the roofs of the huge workshops you work in, but you will also carry your amity outside your workshops and both of you will realize that you have come to live and work here as brothers and sisters, never regarding another as inferior, or oneself as inferior. And if you succeed in doing that you will have a miniature swaraj.

I have said that I am a non-co-operator, I call myself a civil resister—and both words have come to possess a bad odour in the English language like so many other English words—but I non-co-operate in order that I may be able to co-operate. I cannot satisfy myself with false co-operation—anything inferior to 24 carats gold. My non-co-operation does not prevent me from being friendly even to Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer.

It harms no one, it is non-co-operation with evil, with an evil system and not with the evil-doer. My religion teaches me to love even an evil-doer, and my non-co-operation is but part of that religion. I am saying these things not to soothe the ears of any one—I have in my life never been guilty of saying things I did not mean—my nature is to go straight to the heart, and if often I fail in doing so for the time being, I know that truth will ultimately make itself heard and felt, as it has often done in my experience. The wish, therefore, that the relations between you should be of the friendliest character is a desire from the bottom of my heart. And it is my deep prayer that you may help in delivering India from evil and bondage and help her to give the message of peace to the outside world. For this meeting of Indians and Europeans in India must have or can be made to have a special meaning, and what can be better than that we two may live together so as to spread peace and goodwill on earth? May God grant that, in serving the Tatas, you will also serve India and will always realize that you are here for a much higher mission than merely working for an industrial enterprise.

Young India, 20-8-1925

21. PROBLEMS OF NON-VIOLENCE

People keep asking me which acts may be termed violent and which non-violent and, what is one's duty at a particular time. While some of these queries reveal the ignorance of the inquirers, others serve to bring out the difficult dilemmas involved. A Punjabi gentleman has put a question the answer to which is worth giving here. It is as follows:

> What should be done when tigers, wolves and other wild beasts come and carry away other animals or human beings? Or, what should be done about germs in water?

In my humble opinion the simple answer is that where there is danger from tigers, wolves and so on, then killing them becomes inevitable. The germs that water contains must also be inevitably destroyed. Violence which is inevitable does not therefore cease to be so and become non-violence. It has to be recognized as violence. I have no doubt that it would be best if we could contrive to survive without destroying tigers, wolves, etc. However, who could do so? Only he who is not afraid of these animals and can regard them as friends, he alone could do so. Any-

one who refrains from violence because he is afraid, is nevertheless guilty of violence. The mouse is not non-violent towards the cat. At heart, he always has a feeling of violence towards the cat. He cannot kill the latter because he is weak. He alone has the power to practise the dharma of ahimsa who although fully capable of inflicting violence does not inflict it. He alone practises the ahimsa dharma who voluntarily and with love refrains from inflicting violence on anyone. Non-violence implies love, compassion, forgiveness. The Shastras describe these as the virtues of the brave. This courage is not physical but mental. There have been instances of physically frail men having indulged in grave acts of violence with the help of others. There have also been cases where those as physically strong as Yudhishthira[1] have granted pardon to such persons as king Virata[2]. Hence, so long as one has not developed inner strength, one can never practise the dharma of ahimsa. The non-violence practised by the banias today does not deserve the name; one finds in it cruelty sometimes and ignorance all the time.

It was because I know this weakness of ours that during the War I went all out to recruit soldiers in Kheda.[3] And, it was for this very reason that I said at that time that perhaps the most brutal act of the British Government was to have disarmed and thus emasculated the Indian people. I hold the same view even today. If anyone afraid at heart cannot, while remaining unarmed, rid himself of that fear, he should certainly arm himself with a stick or an even more deadly weapon.

Ahimsa is a great vow; it is more difficult than walking on the edge of a sword. Complete adherence to it is almost impossible for one who has a physical form. Severe penance is required for its practice. Penance should be taken to mean renunciation and knowledge. Anyone who desires to possess land cannot practise ahimsa. A peasant necessarily has to protect his land. He must guard it against tigers and wolves. A peasant who is not prepared to punish these animals or thieves, etc., should always be prepared to abandon his field.

In order to be able to practise the dharma of ahimsa, man must abide by the limits laid down by the Shastras and custom. The Shastras do not enjoin violence. But they permit certain acts of violence by regarding them as unavoidable at particular

[1] The eldest of the five Pandava princes in the *Mahabharata*

[2] At whose court the Pandavas had lived in disguise

[3] In 1918; *vide* Vol. XIV, pp. 439-43 & 493-6.

times. For instance, it is believed that the *Manusmriti*[1] permits the slaughter of certain animals. Such slaughter has not been ordained. Thereafter, with progress in thinking, it was decided that this would not be permitted in the *Kaliyuga*[2]. Hence it is customary today to regard certain forms of violence as pardonable, while some of the forms of violence allowed by *Manusmriti* are forbidden. It is obviously wrong to argue that we can go beyond the concessions allowed by the Shastras. There is dharma in self-control and, *adharma*[3] in indulgence. Anyone who does not make use of the latitude given by the Shastras deserves to be congratulated. Ahimsa knows no limits because there are none to self-control. The latter has been welcomed by all the scriptures of the world, while opinions differ widely regarding indulgence. A right angle is the same everywhere, while there is no end to the number of other angles. Non-violence and truth together form, as it were, the right angle of all religions. Conduct which does not fit into that angle should undoubtedly be given up. Imperfect conduct may, perhaps, be permitted. Anyone who practises the dharma of ahimsa should increase his inner strength by being always on the alert and progressively restricting the latitude that he has allowed for himself. There is certainly nothing religious about indulgence. Renouncing through knowledge the worldly life—this is the attainment of *moksha*[4]. Such absolute renunciation is not to be found even on the peaks of the Himalayas. The true cave is the one in the heart. Man can hide himself within it and thus protected can remain untouched by the world even though living and moving freely in it, taking part in those activities which cannot be avoided.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 9-8-1925

[1] The Code of Manu which is the foundation of Hind Law
[2] Age of strife
[3] Opposite of dharma
[4] Deliverance from phenomenal existence

22. LOKAMANYA'S DEATH ANNIVERSARY

This death anniversary has come and gone. It was celebrated here—in Calcutta—too. I had to attend the celebrations. Meetings were held at two places and I attended both. What should I have said there?

What does a son do on the death anniversary of his father? If he is a worthy son, he does not make a speech on his father's virtues but rather does something that the latter would have liked him to do. In the present-day meetings too we shall not invite the sons and relatives of the departed leaders to make speeches. Both they and we should be ashamed if we did. The death anniversaries of two leaders came in close succession, viz., that of Moulvi Abdul Rasul and later that of Lokamanya. I saw the former gentleman's son-in-law at the first meeting. No one asked him to make a speech; that task was left to others. This would suggest that just as fingers are kept at a distance from the nail, we too are separated by a distance from relatives. As a matter of fact, this should not be the case. If a son is not permitted to sing his father's praises like a minstrel, we too should not do so.

I had, therefore, decided against singing praises. I felt embarrassed on the day of the anniversary. Only the previous day I had spoken of the spinning-wheel in the same hall. Would I have to repeat all that again? I received the reply: "Where will you run to for fear of criticism, derision or defeat? You have assumed the task of adhering to truth. Of what consequence is it if that which appears to be true to you does not appear to be so to the rest of the world? It is your dharma to tell the truth and practise it." Hence, I repeated the very same things.

Tilak Maharaj gave the people the first half of a *sloka*[1]: "Swaraj is my birthright". He passed away, leaving it to us to supply the other half of it, which we did as follows: "The spinning-wheel and khadi are the means of obtaining it." Swaraj is not for the educated class alone. It is not for Hindus or Muslims alone, nor is it only for the wealthy class. Lokamanya's swaraj is for Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, all. It is for the educated as well the uneducated, for men as well as women, for villagers as well as city-dwellers. Moreover, this swaraj is such that all should

[1] Used here for "Sacred Verse"

take a more or less equal part in the effort to secure it. That which can be secured through the efforts of a single section of people or a single community is not swaraj but rather rule by that particular community or section. What then is the activity which everyone can take up and which leads to the growth of everyone's strength? Spinning is such an activity. We cannot have cloth without spinning and without spinning we cannot save sixty crores of rupees which are spent in buying cloth from abroad. Moreover, our purpose will not be served if we just save this sum. It should be distributed among crores of Indians.

The spinning-wheel is the only answer to this problem. We can boycott foreign cloth by means of an acitivity which can be taken up by all and which yields good results. Moreover, by doing so we can become strong enough to preserve swaraj as well as to secure it. Hence, those who have come to pay homage to Lokamanya should altogether renounce foreign cloth, wear khadi alone and spin every day for at least half an hour.

Ramanam was dear to Prahlad while he was sleeping, sitting, playing or eating. He cried out that very name even when he was tied to a red hot iron pillar. What could the poor boy do? I am placed in a similar situation with regard to khadi and the spinning-wheel. Even if someone were to tie me up and flog me, I would still cry out that the spinning-wheel and khadi are the means of securing swaraj. There may be—should be—many satellites revolving round it; but, just as the solar system without the sun is nothing, just as an army without a general is like a corpse, just as all activities are futile without Rama, even so without the spinning-wheel all other activities for swaraj are futile.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-8-1925

23. *TO CHAIRMEN OF MEETINGS*

The function of a judge is not to speak much. It is to listen to good, bad or indifferent speeches. Hence some of these gentlemen scrawl on the papers lying in front of them, others draw good pictures on them, while some others keep fidgeting with pieces of string. The chairman of a meeting is in the same pitiable condition.

On the occasion of Moulvi Abdul Rasul's death anniversary, I was given the honour of presiding over the meeting. I had not known the said gentleman personally but, on inquiry, was informed that although he was a learned barrister, he was humble, a whole-hearted supporter of swaraj and one who maintained his independence and self-respect. He regarded Hindu-Muslim unity as a dharma and was a devotee of swadeshi.

How could I make myself worthy of presiding over a meeting on the death anniversary of such a gentleman? My *takli* which shares whatever fate has in store for me, which is my goddess of peace, which is the source of relief to the poor and miserable in India—is always with me. For fear of having it some day separated from me, through oversight, it is now included in the same case as my spectacles or, more precisely, the latter share the same case with the *takli*. I cannot leave it behind any more than I can my spectacles. I took it out and started spinning. I was no longer worried whether the speeches were interesting or otherwise and I started giving an object-lesson in swadeshi which was dear to Maulana Rasul. At the same time as the speeches, my stock of slivers was coming to an end too. The audience benefited in two ways, by listening to the words of the speakers and by looking at the message spelt out by my hands.

What else would I have to say even at the conclusion of the meeting? My true speech took the form of action. Hence, by way of explanation, I spoke on the spinning-wheel. Swadeshi was dear to Maulana Rasul but he had not fully understood its true implications. We had come to bestow the name of "swadeshi" on those musical instruments or clocks whose parts had all been imported but which had been assembled here. We know now that practical and widespread swadeshi means hand-woven khadi made of hand-spun yarn. This was the interpretation of the message given by my hands.

All chairmen cannot have this twofold benefit. However, I would suggest to those who do not have contempt for the *takli* that if they can keep spinning while sitting on their gadi or chair, they could spend their time peacefully and also have the honour of adding something to India's wealth.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 9-8-1925

24. *MY NOTES*

Basanti Devi's Spinning-wheel

I take every opportunity of paying a visit to Shrimati Basanti Devi. I have not yet succeeded in persuading her to go out daily for a walk. Her courage knows no bounds. However, she cannot shake off her mental agony. She can take interest in nothing. Often, late at night, she visits the cremation ground. But that is not to forget her sorrow; it is rather to add to it. There is only one thing in which she can keep herself occupied. She plies the spinning-wheel for two hours at a stretch and likes the work. The famous European poet Goethe makes the heroine of his best play —*Faust*—hold a spinning-wheel and sing the sweetest of songs. Sir Prabhashanker Pattani described in his public speech the effect the spinning-wheel had on him. It is worth while remembering it on this occasion. He suffers from insomnia. Hence, even at midnight he plies the spinning-wheel. In this way, he overcomes various mental anxieties suffered during the day and then he can sleep peacefully. The spinning-wheel, in this manner, has been able to bring relief to a politician, one who is separated from a dear one and a widow.

Propaganda for Khadi in Maha Gujarat

From some figures published by the Gujarat Khadi Mandal relating to propagation of khadi, I find that there are thirty khadi-promoting institutions in Maha Gujarat. The khadi produced in the last twelve months by 16 of these institutions out of yarn spun by its members themselves or of purchased hand-spun yarn, amounted to more than 2,64,000 square yards. The sale of khadi in that period amounted to Rs. 3,85,761-1-3. The net sale proceeds after deducting various charges, etc., are slightly smaller. The figures include khadi that has been brought from outside—for example, Andhra.

This quantity of khadi cannot be regarded as the total quantity produced by Gujarat. For instance, at some places in Kutch and Kathiawar, where the spinning-wheel had never ceased working, the weaving of khadi goes on all the time. Nevertheless, the above quantity is far less than what we wish to achieve.

Besides these figures, the following is worth knowing: the number of spinning-wheels, the number of persons who weave hand-spun yarn, how many of these latter have taken to weaving again because of the swadeshi movement and how many of them are weavers who have recently learnt this art, how many of them are the so-called untouchables and what is their monthly income, etc. We should find out: the number of spinning-wheels that are in use as a means of livelihood and the number of those which are being used as a sacrificial offering, what is the value of the khadi which was brought over from other parts; how many volunteer workers there are in these organizations and of these how many are paid workers and how many honorary; the amount of the average salary paid to a person and what is the maximum and minimum salary paid to a single individual.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 9-8-1925

25. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, JAMSHEDPUR*[1]

August 9, 1925

Replying to the address in Hindi, Mr. Gandhi announced that at the meeting at which he himself was present along with Mr. R. D. Tata, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Steel Co., Mr. Andrews, and Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Tata agreed that the Labour Association with officers duly elected would be recognized by the Company, and that the Company would be prepared to collect subscriptions of the members of the Labour Association from their pay and further that, subject to the confirmation of the Board of Directors, as a token of goodwill and conciliation, Mr. G. Sethi who was dismissed by the Company and Mr. Thomas, who has since been working as an Honorary Secretary of the Labour Association, would be offered re-employment in the Company's works.

Mr. Gandhi hoped the Labour Association would devote its energies principally to the welfare of the labourers and the concessions made would end all the cause of friction between the Company and tens of thousands of workers.

[1] Gandhiji was presented with an address in Hindi and a purse of Rs. 5,000 at a mass meeting attended by some 20,000 people.

Mr. Gandhi then exhorted his audiecne to shun two great evils which were only too prevalent among the labouring classes all over India. These evils were eating into their vitals. He said:

You cannot get swaraj until you can leave off drink and until you can look upon all women as your mothers and sisters.

The Searchlight, 14-8-1925

26. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Shravana Vad 7 [August 10, 1925][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is very clear, I want it just like this every time. Both of you will be happy to know that my weight is nearly eight stone, i.e., 112 lb. I had come down to 106 or 108 in Juhu. I was weighed in the Jamshedpur Hospital.

The Dadabhai Centenary falls on 4th September. I will definitely go to Bombay then.[2] So I shall have only a few days at the Ashram. I must reach Bihar on the 12th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 591 also S.N. 9346. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

27. REMARKS IN VISITORS' BOOK

August 12, 1925

I was taken to the *Basumati* offices. I was pleased with the appointments. I congratulate the proprietor on the choice and cheapness of some of his publications.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 5992

[1] Reference to the Dadabhai Centenary suggests that the letter was written in 1925; in that year *Shravana Vad* 7 fell on August 10.

[2] Gandhiji presided over the Dadabhai Centenary meeting held in Bombay on September 4, 1925.

28. SPEECH AT Y.M.C.A., CALCUTTA[1]

[August 12, 1925]

In the course of his lecture Mahatmaji asked the young Indian Christians to follow the noble and glorious examples of the late Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Kalicharan Banerjee and Susil Kumar Rudra, to imbibe their ardent love of mother tongue and national manners and modes of living. Also in their duty to the religion they had given up and secondly, the duty to the religion they had embraced. He appealed to them not to allow themselves to be isolated, but to try to understand the wishes and aspirations of the millions, understand the difficult social problems of the masses and of the mankind and to solve them. Let them prepare for villages, study the wants, the primary wants of the villagers and satisfy those wants.[2]

Forward, 13-8-1925

29. THE LION OF BENGAL

The death of Sir Surendranath Bannerjea removes from Indian political life one who has left upon it the deep impress of his own personality. What though with new ideals and new hopes within recent times he receded into the background? Our present is the result of our past. Ideals and aspirations of the present day would have been impossible without the invaluable work done by pioneers like Sir Surendra. Time was when the student world idolized him, when his advice was considered indispensable in all national deliberations, and his eloquence held audiences spell-bound. It is impossible to recall the stirring events of the partition days in Bengal and not to think with gratitude and pride of Sir Surendranath's matchless services in connection with it. It was then that Sir Surendranath justly earned from his grateful countrymen the title of "Surrender-not". During the blackest period of the time of partition, Sir Surendranath never wavered, never lost hope. He threw himself into the agitation

[1] The meeting was held at 9.30 p.m. at the Chowringhee Branch of the Y.M.C.A. and was attended largely by Europeans.

[2] Questions were asked at the conclusion of the speech. To a question what was the duty of young Indians towards young Europeans, Gandhiji's reply was "Fraternization". To this he added a rider in a lighter vein, in answer to a supplementary, "By arranging boxing matches".

with all his might. His enthusiasm infected the whole of Bengal. His determination to unsettle the 'settled fact' was unshaken. He gave us the necessary training in courage and resolution. He taught us not to fear authority. His work in the Education Department was no less valuable than in the political. Through the Ripon College thousands of young men came under his direct influence and received their liberal education. His regular habits gave him health, vigour, and, what may be called for India, a long life. He retained his mental faculties unimpaired up to the last moment. It required a courage of no small order to resume in his seventy-seventh year the editorship of his paper the *Bengalee*. Indeed, he was so confident of his mental vigour and physical capacity, that he said to me, when I had the privilege of meeting him at Barrackpore two months ago, that he expected to live till 91 years, after which he would not wish to live as he would not retain his mental vigour long thereafter. But Fates had decided otherwise. They snatched him away from us without notice. For nobody had expected so sudden a death. Up to the early hours of the morning of Thursday the 6th instant, he betrayed no sign of dissolution. But though he is no longer with us in the body, his services to the country will never be forgotten. He will ever be remembered as one of the makers of modern India.

Young India, 13-8-1925

30. NOTES

KHADDAR WORKERS' CENSUS

The Secretary, A.I.K.B., had circularized all the provinces to send a list of their khaddar workers with particulars about their qualifications, work and remuneration. Figures have been received only from centres in seven provinces, viz., Bihar, U.P., Utkal, Assam, Maharashtra, Bengal, Kerala and Karnatak, those provinces where khaddar work on any considerable scale is being done having not yet sent their figures. Even the facts and figures so far received from the other provinces are incomplete. Thus, for instance, Bihar reports 32 paid and 2 honorary workers, but the names of some of the most prominent workers there are to be missed. Many centres have been mentioned but not Malkhachak. From Bengal only the Abhoy Ashram has sent the list from which, too, the names of Dr. Suresh Bannerjee, Sjt. Haripad Chatterjea and Annadababu are unaccountably left out. The Karna-

tak list does not contain the name of Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande who has, since Belgaum,[1] devoted the whole of his time to khaddar work. Only the Maharashtra list seems to be fairly full and accurate. Gujarat, Andhra, Bengal, Tamil Nadu, whose lists should have been particularly interesting and instructive have been entirely reticent.

And yet the incomplete and meagre details received have an interest of their own. The total number of paid workers are 148, receiving an aggregate allowance of Rs. 3,469, i.e., an average allowance of Rs. 23 per head. The number of honorary workers is 58; though the educational qualifications in some cases have not been shown, the lists show no less than 16 graduates and three lawyers and a number of undergraduates. The maximum allowance received does not exceed Rs. 65 per mensem, and the minimum is as low as Rs. 2. Almost all the workers are full-time workers, and three of the honorary full-time workers are ladies. 128 khaddar centres are mentioned.

No Labour, No Meal

Some time ago, I was taken to a magnificent mansion called the 'Marble Palace' in Calcutta. It is richly furnished with some very expensive and some very beautiful paintings. The owners feed, in the compound in front of the palace, all the beggars who choose to go there, and I am told that the number every day is several thousands. This is no doubt a princely charity. It does great credit to the benevolent spirit of the donors, but the incongruity of this ragged humanity feeding whilst the majestic palace is, as it were, mocking at their wretched condition does not seem to strike the donors at all. Another such painful sight was witnessed by me on my visit to Suri, where the reception committee had arranged for feeding the beggars of the district. At the Marble Palace, the crowd that besieged me passed through the line of beggars eating off their dusty leaves spread on the ground. Some almost trampled over them. It was by no means a pleasant spectacle. In Suri it was a little more decently managed, for the crowd was not to pass through the line of beggars, but the motor car that drove me to my destination was slowly taken through the line of the beggars as they were eating. I felt humiliated, more so to think that this was all done in my honour, because, as it was put to me by one of the friends there, I was 'friend of the poor'. My friendship for them must be a sorry affair

[1] The reference is to the Congress session of 1924 held here.

if I could be satisfied with a large part of humanity being reduced to beggary. Little did my friends know that my friendship for the paupers of India has made me hard-hearted enough to contemplate their utter starvation with equanimity in preference to their utter reduction to beggary. My ahimsa would not tolerate the idea of giving a free meal to a healthy person who has not worked for it in some honest way, and if I had the power I would stop every *sadavarta* where free meals are given. It has degraded the nation and it has encouraged laziness, idleness, hypocrisy and even crime. Such misplaced charity adds nothing to the wealth of the country, whether material or spiritual, and gives a false sense of meritoriousness to the donor. How nice and wise it would be if the donor were to open institutions where they would give meals under healthy, clean surroundings to men and women who would work for them. I personally think that the spinning-wheel or any of the processes that cotton has to go through will be an ideal occupation. But if they will not have that, they may choose any other work, only the rule should be: no labour, no meal. Every city has its own difficult problem of beggars, a problem for which the monied men are responsible. I know that it is easier to fling free meals in the faces of idlers, but much more difficult to organize an institution where honest work has to be done before meals are served. From a pecuniary standpoint, in the initial stages at any rate, the cost of feeding people after taking work from them will be more than the cost of the present free kitchens. But I am convinced that it will be cheaper in the long run, if we do not want to increase in geometrical progression the race of loafers which is fast overrunning this land.

"VARNASHRAMA" AND UNTOUCHABILITY

A correspondent writes:

> With reference to your comments on my letter on *Varnashrama* published in *Young India* of the 23rd April 1925, I fully appreciate the distinction between *Varnashrama* and untouchability and agree that there is no sanction whatsoever for the latter in Hinduism. But is it not clear that, if the principle of 'division of work based on birth' which you approve continues to be the basis of our social organization, the untouchables will be always with us? What is more reasonable than to suppose that in that case those members of society who hereditarily perform such social duties as scavenging, corpse-bearing and grave-digging will continue to be looked upon as too unclean to be touched by the rest of the community? In all other countries, scavengers, cobblers, barbers, washermen, grave-diggers, undertakers, etc., are not considered untouch-

> able either as individuals or as a class for the simple reason that in those countries these occupations are not hereditary and any member of any of the classes can at any time become a soldier, trader, teacher, lawyer, politician or priest. It seems to me, therefore, that the root of the evil of the untouchability so peculiar to our country lies in our peculiar social system exclusively based on the principle of heredity. And it also seems to me that so long as we adhere to that principle we cannot hope to get rid of untouchability. It is just conceivable that, under the influence of mighty reformers like Ramanuja or under the stress of a strong political passion, its virulence may abate from time to time but the evil cannot be wholly eliminated. I am afraid that every attempt to end untouchability without ending the caste idea will prove as futile as attempting to cut off a tree at its top.

The letter is very plausible and, unless the reformer takes care, the danger which the correspondent fears may become a stern reality. There is, however, a clear confusion of thought in the argument. Does untouchability in the case of a cobbler or scavenger attach to birth or to occupation? If it attaches to birth, it is hideous and must be rooted out; if it attaches to occupation, it may be a sanitary rule of great importance. It is of universal application. A collier, whilst he is engaged in his work, is practically an untouchable. He himself refuses to shake the hand extended to him and says, "I am too dirty". But his work finished, he takes his bath, changes his dress, and very properly mixes with the highest in the land. Immediately, therefore, we remove the taint of birth, i.e., the idea of superiority and inferiority attaching to birth, we purify *Varnashrama*. The scavenger's children may remain scavengers without being or feeling degraded and they will be no more considered untouchables than Brahmins. The fault does not, therefore, lie in recognizing the law of heredity and transmission of qualities from generation to generation, but it lies with the faulty conception of inequality.

Varnashrama, in my opinion, was not conceived in any narrow spirit. On the contrary, it gave the labourer, the Sudra, the same status as the thinker, the Brahmin. It provided for the accentuation of merit and elimination of demerit, and it transferred human ambition from the general worldly sphere to the permanent and the spiritual. The aim of the Brahmin and the Sudra was common—*moksha*, or self-realization—not realization of fame, riches and power. Later on, this lofty conception of *Varnashrama* became degraded and came to be identified with mere empty ceremonial and assumption of superiority by some and imposition of degrada-

tion upon others. This admission is not a demonstration of the weakness of *Varnashrama*, but of human nature which, if it has a tendency under certain circumstances to rise to the highest point, it has also a tendency under certain other circumstances to go down to the lowest. What the reformer seeks to do is to end the curse of untouchability and to restore *Varnashrama* to its proper place. Whether *Varnashrama* thus transmuted will survive the reform or not remains to be seen. It will surely depend upon the new Brahmin class that is imperceptibly coming into being, namely, those who are dedicating themselves, body, soul and mind, to service of Hinduism and the country. If they have nothing of worldly ambition, it will be well with Hinduism, if they have, Hinduism, like any other ism, coming into the hands of ambitious men will perish. But I have an immutable faith in the capacity of Hinduism to purge itself of all impurities from time to time. I do not think that that capacity is now exhausted.

ADVICE FROM JAPAN

Some time during last month two Japanese friends came to me, engaged me in a pleasant conversation and left with me the following document:

> The great spirits of India once came to Japan through China.
>
> They made great influences upon the whole of the souls of Japanese. The influences still have upon us Japanese and will have for ever, so Japanese pay great special respects to India.
>
> Now I am here in India—so much respected country by our people —I feel quite happy.
>
> Even in the present time, at our own age, there came out a greatest man who is wholly self-sacrificed and absolutely honest to the justice and truth.
>
> It should be great happiness to me if I should be allowed to be present before him and should be permitted to be given some influences from him directly.
>
> We know him only through books and newspapers. There may be some misunderstandings on us to know about him.
>
> Let me have honour to be given some of his opinions upon our thoughts.
>
> Men are borned naked. But to them two hands are given.
>
> We think God have given paradise upon men, but he have not given it directly upon men, He have given it indirectly upon them by giving two hands, —the power to create any and everything—to make paradise itself in the present world, so I think it is the duty of men to make use their hands best. For instance, they must make clothes with

many variety and beauty to fit to several climates and different occasions. And in some occasions they must be clothed more beautiful than wild beasts and fowls, more beautiful than the skin of tigers or peacocks. Because to be beautiful is one essential thing in paradise with to be good and to be truth.

To make railroads, steamers, and many different machines is our duty and we must utilize them with utmost efficiency, so yarn system, make pardon to say, I think, is not the final end of our purposes to attain, only one of means to teach people to be thrift, frugality, sound minded and such as to give other many good influences upon them, and make utilize plenty of time in country lifes where many hands are left idle.

I have purposely refrained from making any corrections, for its quaintness would then be gone. I wish I had read this document before seeing these friends, in which case I would have told them that it was my realization of the fact that God has given us two hands that made me think of asking millions of the inhabitants of this land not to allow them to remain idle for a single minute, but to make the best use possible of them so as to be able, by their use during leisure hours, to clothe the whole of India. I would also have asked my visitors to help us to realize our destiny by inducing Japan not to inflict her cloth upon us, but to engage only in such commerce with us as would be mutually beneficial. Finally, I would have told them that I had no quarrel with railroads, steamers and many different machines as such, but that I protested against the abuse that was at present being made of them, either for exploiting many nations of the earth or for destroying them.

Young India, 13-8-1925

31. CURRENCY AND COTTON MILLS

Here is a boiled-down wail from Trichinopoly:

It is regrettable to find that in all your speeches you fail to say a single word about the Indian currency problem and how the Government of India is trying to destroy the indigenous industries by raising the exchange to suit the interests of London merchants. Perhaps you are of opinion that about 300 cotton mills started in India are not a national asset and that the people will be more benefited by the import of cheaper foreign goods from Lancashire. For the past 30 years, the adoption of 1 s. 4 d. to the rupee worked well. Even at that time, the Bombay cotton mills were unable to compete with Lancashire owing to the

> crushing excise duty. There is no excise duty on jute mills of Calcutta which were declaring a dividend of 100 to 400 for the past eight years. At present, the cotton mills are passing through a severe trade depression owing to the huge accumulation of stock from Lancashire which has been dumped into India when the Government of India raised the exchange from 1s. 4d. in 1923 to 1s. 6d. in 1924 to stimulate imports from Great Britain. There is no use of asking the people to burn foreign clothes, or to spin yarn and wear khaddar unless they are sold at a moderate price. The competition from Lancashire owing to the present high exchange will destroy the khaddar industry even more quickly than the mill industry.
>
> In these circumstances, I earnestly appeal to Mahatmaji to turn his attention more to the industrial regeneration of India *by agitating against the present high exchange policy and against the excise duty* which is unjustly levied upon the cotton mills merely to help Lancashire.

I publish the foregoing not for any merit it contains, but for dispelling the ignorance of methods of warfare the letter woefully betrays. Of course, I have not dealt with currency in the pages of *Young India*, as I have not dealt with many other evils of the present system of Government, e.g., the huge army expenditure. If any writing of mine could possibly remove these gigantic evils, I would every week recount them and impress the services of friends for the same purpose so as to be able to say the same thing in a variety of ways. But those who think like my correspondent should understand that if the evils we know still persist, they do so not because they have not been publicly proclaimed or because the rulers do not know them. Abler men than myself have exposed the wickedness of the Government currency policy, but the exposure has proved of no avail. The policy is supported, not by force of reason, but by the 'sharp edge of the sword'. I am an economist of time and labour. I believe in putting before the readers only those things in which they themselves can, if they will, do something. I do not need to rouse the feeling of the readers in respect of the evils we are suffering from. They feel them daily. But they are helpless. My privilege, therefore, is to place before them a remedy, or remedies if I can think of more than one. At the risk, therefore, of being unpopular and tiresome by reason of repetition, I continue with all the capacity at my command to tell the reader how we can help to advance the salvation of this depressed country.

Exclusion of foreign cloth is the one thing which is most practicable and is the most effective remedy for our many ills. I

must, therefore, continue to harp on that one (to me) pleasant theme.

The correspondent is wholly mistaken if he thinks that this country has to wait, for bringing about exclusion of foreign cloth, for a phenomenal reduction in the price of khaddar or even of indigenous mill-cloth. The exclusion will be brought about only when the nation realizes its national dharma which she must perform, cost what it may. A good Hindu does not count the cost of performing his *Gayatri* or his multitudinous ceremonials. A good Mussalman does not count the cost of offering his prayers five times a day, neither bargains for an easier road to heaven. It is the business of the Manchester merchants to take their calico to the remotest village of India at the lowest price possible. It is the duty of the villager to reject it in preference to his ill-made khaddar which, from a purely economic point of view, may cost more than the Manchester calico. Why should we think that any agitation on our part will induce the Manchester merchants to become so philanthropic as to waive the facilities by way of currency and otherwise which they can command from the Government of their own making? Will an Indian merchant similarly placed do otherwise than what his Manchester brother is doing today? The only agitation, therefore, that is relevant and effective is the generation of some kind of force that will effectively prevent the dumping down of Manchester and other foreign cloth on the sacred soil of India. My correspondent must be an indifferent reader of *Young India*, or he should have known that I am not indifferent to the mill industry of my country. I proclaim on every relevant occasion that I want all the protection that I can secure for that industry, and that, if I had the power, I would impose a prohibitive tariff on all foreign cloth. But there my duty ends. The mill industry stands in no need of other support from me. It has capital, it has agents who take its manufactures to all parts of India. It is well able to take care of itself. Unfortunately, it is timid and not national. It thinks in terms of profits of its few shareholders. It takes no note of the masses who are the purchasers of its manufactures. Khaddar is no enemy to that industry. Khaddar is its infant brother standing in need of delicate nursing—all the protection that a loving nurse can extend to it. It, therefore, commands my exclusive attention and I endeavour to enlist it from others. When it has grown to maturity, and not before, will be the time to consider the rival claims of the big brother—the mill industry. Only a little clear thinking is required to perceive that rehabilitation of khaddar necessarily

means protection for the indigenous mill industry for perhaps a generation to come. But if out of our ignorance we fail to concentrate upon khaddar, not only is khaddar doomed, but with it is doomed the mill industry of India.

Young India, 13-8-1925

32. SOME STRIKING FACTS

The following report received from the Secretary of the All-India Khaddar Board will be read with the greatest interest:[1]

The report does not only show us how much work has been possible in a year's time amongst the villagers through the simple instrumentality of the spinning population. But what is more striking is a comparison between the figures regarding the earnings from hand-spinning and from agriculture. These figures dispel the idea once for all about the insignificance of the wages received from hand-spinning by professional spinners. The lowest income from the charkha is 14% of the other income, but in some individual families the percentage is as high as 66. The reader will not fail to note too how other reforms naturally come in side by side with spinning. The foregoing report refers to temperance work. In many places in Bengal I have noticed that those who are interested in introducing spinning amongst the villagers took up medical relief as a matter of course and, if they do not touch the other departments of life in the villages, it is not because of want of will, but because the workers are too few, and the villagers too conservative to respond merely for the asking. What is true of the villages[2] examined in Tamil Nadu is equally true of many villages in Bengal. My enquiries have led to the discovery that thousands of cultivators make no more than Rs. 7 to 8 per month during the year. An addition of Rs. 2/- out of spinning done only by the family members is a very substantial relief for these poor cultivators.

Young India, 13-8-1925

[1] The report, which dealt in detail with the progress of spinning, khadi, etc., in certain villages in the Salem district of Madras, is not reproduced here.

[2] These were: Uppupalayam, Sembampalayam, Chittalandur, Pulianpatti and Pudupalayam.

33. LETTER TO ANTOINETTE MIRBEL

August 13, 1925

I have your most touching letter.[1] I do not want to strive against you, and if you wish to come, by all means do. Only remember that you will find me of the same flesh of which you and all other fellow-mortals are made. The imperishable soul within can meet and talk from a distance of thousands of miles. However, I do not wish to deny the usefulness, at times, of physical nearness, and if you gain anything by being near me physically, it will be because of your marvellous faith and not because of any superhuman powers that I possess. I am merely a seeker after truth—undoubtedly striving to attain human perfection which all of us can attain by continuous effort. If you decide to come, and if I know the steamer you are to take, someone will meet you at the Bombay docks and take you to the train leaving for Sabarmati. As my right hand is disabled, I am dictating this letter and signing with my left hand.[2]

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] She had written that she had read a book of extracts from Gandhiji's writings, and wanted to make Gandhiji her "Master and Guru".

[2] In her reply of September 6, Antoinette Mirbel wrote to Gandhiji how his letter had made her "shed tears of joy over it." On September 29, she informed Gandhiji that she was leaving Marseilles on October 9 and would reach Bombay on October 23.

34. LETTER TO J. KUSARY

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
August 15, 1925

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I like your business-like letter. Here is my reply. There should be no hurry. You will find enough work with the spinning-wheel. You need not think of attracting all classes at once. I should not start Hindu Sabhas, at least for the time being. Conducting a school and giving medical relief may well form part of a spinning organization, so far as they help spinning. If workers engage in paying industries, they cannot give exclusive attention to spinning. But if to spinning you add weaving, you make your institution financially self-supporting in the end. During the interval, you must expect the nation to find livelihood for the workers who give their whole time to the development of spinning. You must not think of having property that will yield a permanent income.

I do not know what you mean by the example of Christian missionaries. You are yourselves working in villages. To make people self-reliant, fearless, self-supporting, resourceful and healthy is to make them keep swaraj always in view. There is nothing in the name swaraj apart from the qualities I have mentioned. Philanthropic societies exclude the idea of political freedom. You do not exclude it, neither do you parade it to raise false notions.

You may seek help from district boards and the like for your work so long as you are not called upon to sacrifice your freedom. Villagers' non-co-operation consists in modelling their lives, so far as practicable, independently of Government. They need not go to law-courts if they will not quarrel, and if they will submit to arbitration. They need not send their children to Government schools.

If the workers have the spirit of real non-violent non-co-operation, they will infect the villagers with it, not by speech but by their conduct.

I would not be a party to voluntarily sending any boy to a Government school. National schools, imperfect though they may be, must be encouraged, but here again no boy need be prevented by any mechanical contrivance from going to a Govern-

ment school. It is no use his refraining unless he feels the indignity himself.

If by half-educated Indians you mean those who cannot speak English correctly, I know many such who have got the highest ideals. There are thousands of graduates who have no higher ideal than to make as much money as they can, and disappear from public life altogether.

I wonder if I have answered all your questions.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. JITENDRANATH KUSARY
SATYASHRAM
BAHROK P. O.
DACCA

From a photostat: G.N. 7188

35. LETTER TO SAMBAMURTI

148, RUSSA ROAD,
August 15, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

My unexpectedly long stay in Bengal has upset all my arrangements. Up to the end of October I am booked in Bihar. There will then remain the following provinces which I was expected to visit before the end of the year. They are Andhra, Tamilnad, Kerala, Karnatak, C.P. Marathi, C.P. Hindi and Maharashtra.

It is impossible to visit all these provinces in less than two months. Unless, therefore, it is absolutely necessary, I would ask you to disengage me from the projected visit to your province. If, however, you consider that it is absolutely necessary for me to visit your province, please let me know how long you will want me.

If more provinces require my presence than it is possible for me to visit during the time available, I propose to draw lots. I would urge you, therefore, to waive the visit if it is at all possible.

I am in Calcutta up to the 31st instant. I would like you to let me have your reply by letter or telegram before that date.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. SAMBAMURTI
PRESIDENT, P.C.C.
RAJAHMUNDRY

From a microfilm: S.N. 10651

remember these constructive virtues. What has he not done for the education of Bengal! Was he not at one time the idol of young men of Bengal? Let us imitate him in the love of the motherland; every one of us, man, woman or child, all of us can imitate.

There are many more things, but one thing I must not omit because it is a treasured memory. When I was with him at Barrackpore, he said to me, "I am going to live till 91 years. I am now preparing the second edition of my reminiscences. I am going to give many a battle to the Government, many a battle to the Swarajists. I shall be engaged in all these things. But do you know what is nearest to my heart?" "I don't know," said I. "I belong," replied Sir Surendranath, "to the school of Vidyasagar. You will find it written in the first page of my book. If I had to rewrite the whole of my life, what do you think I would do? I would serve the neglected widow. I would repair the fortunes of many a broken home. I cannot bear the sight of innocent children having widowhood enforced upon them." Let the young men of Bengal remember their little innocent sisters. I hear such cases from every side of Bengal. Bengal is no exception, things are going the same all over India. A case was brought to my notice only last night. I do not want to detain you on that case. I simply mention this thing to enable the young men of Bengal to understand what it is that we have to do.

The political freedom of this country involves our contact with every department of life. You may not get political freedom but cannot wait for social amelioration. If you will have little girls marrying and becoming mothers, we shall have to live as a race of pigmies. No wonder, then, if we are not able to think clearly for ourselves; no wonder, then, if in the words of Lord Willingdon, we will not say "yes" when we should say "yes" and "no" when we mean "no". I know many Englishmen have asked me: "When will you learn to say "yes" when you mean "yes" and "no" when you mean "no", irrespective of consequences."

Let us, therefore, touch the national life in every department and we will have sufficiently revered the memory of this great patriot.

Forward, 16-8-1925

37. LABOURERS' SAD PLIGHT

A gentleman has written the following letter[1], mentioning his own name and address:

There seems to be no exaggeration in this letter. Those who have some experience of the labouring class are aware of this. In spite of any improvement that may take place in their condition, I do not see the possibility of much change in it. What is involved here is the education of this class. The labourers that the writer refers to are not those employed in mills. Theirs is a different tale. These facts relate to labourers employed in masonry work, etc. That class will continue to exist so long as the world lasts. The only safeguard for them is in education. There is no reason why they should offer bribes, there is no reason why they should remain suppressed. Their ignorance and weakness are the reasons why they offer bribes, remain suppressed, witness or perform licentious acts. Neither the spinning-wheel nor weaving offers any remedy for this. These can help a little, but they cannot impart knowledge to these labourers. The correspondent himself shows weakness. If he is able to feed his mother and educate his brother only on condition that he is a witness to such immorality, he should starve himself and feed his mother and put a stop to his brother's education. His brother's as well as his own education could be said to begin from the very day that he does so. The mother, if she is not a cripple, should also work. She should either spin or weave. In order to fulfil his vow of spinning, the correspondent should carry a *takli* wherever he goes and then he would never have to suffer hunger even if he has no spinning-wheel. And, with more such brave labourers the atmosphere around them will get purified.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-8-1925

[1] Not translated here. The correspondent, himself a labourer, had complained about bribery among overseers who supervised the work and about their licentious behaviour towards women labourers.

38. MY SENTINELS

Lucky is the man who has self-appointed sentinels. I think I am such a fortunate person. Numberless are my critics. Some speak out of malice, others out of ignorance, some apparently because that is their custom. I learn all I can from these persons; this, however, is not much. I deliberately refrain from reading comments which I know are merely malicious, lest I should be angry with the critics and anger lead to delusion.

Those who keep guard over me, however, belong to a different category; they are trying to make a perfect man of me. They will forgive faults in others, but they get agitated when they find any fault in me. Such sentinels I welcome as, with their help, I hope to attain perfection. It is the dharma of everyone to become perfect. I have been able to see my dharma. The attainment of perfection should not, I think, be impossible if the circumstances are favourable. My sentinels have been contriving to create for me such circumstances. One such sentinel writes to say:[1]

I welcome this letter. The correspondent mentions only three funds. In my life, however, I must have collected not three nor thirteen, nor even thirty, but perhaps three hundred funds, large as well as small. There is one rule that I always abide by. I do not lend a hand in collecting funds where I do not regard the secretaries or treasurers as dependable. And, to this day I have had no experience where those in charge of maintaining accounts have misappropriated funds. This does not imply that not a single pie has been missing from any of the funds. Despite great vigilance on the part of the secretary and the treasurer, sums have been misappropriated. I have found that the secretary or the officers primarily concerned are not to blame for this. I shall cease to collect funds when I start doubting my judgment of persons. This is not to say that my judgment is correct, but I believe that as a rule I would obtain pass marks in any test for ability to judge.

Let us now take up those funds one after the other. Accounts of the funds of the Satyagraha Sabha[2] and the Swaraj Sabha[3]

[1] Not translated here

[2] Founded by Gandhiji in Bombay in 1919

[3] All-India Home Rule League which was re-named by Gandhiji as Swaraj Sabha after he accepted its presidentship in April 1920

have been kept. Shri Shankerlal Banker was their life and leading light. The accounts are open to inspection. The sums in these funds were small and the account-books have been preserved.

The Jallianwala Bagh Fund[1] was a large one. It did amount to about five lakhs, though not to ten. Pandit Malaviyaji, the jewel of India, was its very soul. Its accounts up to the last pie have been published many times. They have been brought out as a booklet and have also been published in newspapers. A part of the fund has been used for the purchase of a piece of land, in which there is today a beautiful well-maintained garden. And if the project has gone no further, perhaps I am mainly responsible for it. The hopes we entertained when it was conceived are there no longer. It is only when communal disputes are settled that some form of a fitting memorial can be built there. The reader will be sorry to learn that today even that garden has become a bone of contention. I dare not spend the money in building a useless memorial. If a proper building is not constructed during the lifetime of the present trustees, it will be done in future. Meanwhile, I am satisfied at any rate that the money is in good hands.

The largest fund was the Tilak Swaraj Fund. It too has been severely criticized. Its accounts were maintained fully and are still there. They have been published in the form of a book. The accounts have been examined by auditors. I am firmly convinced that that fund has been least mismanaged. It may be said that it was not used very intelligently. This, however, was inevitable. In this first attempt to use a large sum of money through an organization the lack of competence was less than is usually found. The reason for this was the constant vigilance on the part of the secretary and the treasurer. There has not been as much written off here as in a business firm; on an average such a firm makes allowance for a loss of ten per cent by way of bad debts. I have found certain big businessmen in South Africa writing off 25 per cent as bad debts. The Congress might have suffered a loss of hardly one per cent. I may be mistaken in this. This may actually amount to two per cent but certainly not to ten per cent. The reader must note that this fund has not yet been exhausted. It has enabled us to have transactions in khadi amounting to lakhs of rupees and to buy a building in Bombay. Thousands of spinning-wheels have started working

[1] *Vide* Vol. XVII.

because of it, national schools have been established all over the country, and are run even today, out of this fund. Not even a pie from it has been used outside the country.

The other fund, worth knowing about although it involves a small amount, is the Padhiar[1] Fund. There may be a difference of opinion on the use it has been put to. I had, however, looked into the details of the fund. I know, at any rate, that not a single rupee was misused and that the fund has been entrusted to honest persons.

Last year, I was given large sums by my readers for relieving distress in Malabar.[2] Detailed accounts of the amount that was spent from it were published in the South Indian newspapers. There is still some balance left over with me in the bank. I cannot give the figures now as I am out of station. I am looking for proper ways to use that sum for some good purpose. I do not know of a single pie of it having been misused.

Let us now come to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund in Bengal. Some of the best people in Bengal are among its trustees. Seven persons are in charge of operating it. From this fund, two lakhs of rupees were paid by way of debts. The public got a large building worth three lakhs in return. Arrangements are being made for the immediate opening of a hospital in that building. That work is being looked after by the well-known doctor of the place—Dr. Bidhan Roy. I am, therefore, certain that these funds will be used as we would like them to be.

Finally, let us take the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. For the time being, by becoming its chairman I have taken the responsibility for it on myself. I am mainly responsible for nominating its trustees. I wish that my capacity, such as it is, may be gauged by the way in which this fund is administered. Its secretary and treasurer are noted workers. Its aim is to propagate the spinning-wheel and khadi. I wish to dedicate the latter part of my life to this work. But I do not know what the will of God may be.

The work of cow-protection has of course to be done. That task is beyond my capacity to handle. I am on the look-out for a good Marwari treasurer. I have received letters from many aspirants to the secretaryship. I have to select someone from among these persons. Let me, however, talk only of the funds now. I have no desire, whatsoever, to collect any more funds in addition to

[1] Sunderji Padhiar, a Gujarati author much admired by Gandhiji

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXV, pp. 2-4.

these. Whether the total amounts to 10 lakhs or not, contributions from Bengal will be discontinued at the end of this month. I made a small beginning in Jamshedpur for the All-India memorial. The sum of Rs. 5,000 collected by the menfolk there will go to the Bengal fund. The sum the women gave me will be used for the all-India fund. This amounted to over a thousand. Another sum of Rs. 500 donated by a Gujarati gentleman and a sum of Rs. 500 donated by a Sikh gentleman will also be credited to the latter fund. The only reason for doing so is that Jamshedpur is in Bihar. The ten lakhs to be contributed by Bengal should be collected from Bengal and from Bengalis living in other provinces. If other Indians of their own accord send money for this purpose, it will not be refused. This, however, cannot be insisted upon. And, where the matter is left to my discretion, it is my dharma to credit these sums to the all-India fund.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 16-8-1925

39. *MY NOTES*

Visit to Jamshedpur

Jamshedpur was originally called Sakchi. It is in the province of Bihar. Born of the vision of Jamshedji Tata it has become one of the largest iron producers in the world. This place was formerly an unpopulated forest; now 1,06,000 people live there. Among them there are people of all communities and faiths—Bengalis, Biharis, Sikhs, Kabulis, Parsis and Christians. There are several factories there. This township owes a debt of gratitude to the courage of Jamshedji Tata. Hence the then Governor or Viceroy named it Jamshedpur. It is also called Tatanagar by the labourers.

I had planned to see this factory many years ago. One thing after another, however, prevented me from doing so. On this occasion, too, I would have been unable to go had Andrews not urged me to go there for the sake of the labourers. Andrews and persons like him make me helpless and drag me along according to their wishes. Hence, I went to Jamshedpur and stayed there for two days.[1]

[1] In the second week of August 1925

However, what can one see of such a large factory in two days? I could not see a single thing well. I myself am a labourer and went there to serve the labourers. Nevertheless I have been unable to get any idea of the living conditions of the labourers. What could I find out until I had seen their homes, their courtyards, and so on.

Nevertheless, what follows will convey my impression: The climate is good; there is very good water supply. The houses presented a good appearance from outside. To all appearances, people seemed to be happy. The roads looked well built. Mr. Andrews is the president of the labour union. Three outstanding matters were resolved after a little discussion, viz., that the company should recognize the labour union, that the latter could freely elect its own leaders, that Mr. Shethi could continue to be the secretary of the union and that Mr. Ratan Tata should arrange to re-employ him in the company. If the labourers would apply in writing, the company would, within a period that it found suitable, pay their dues directly to the union by deducting them from wages. The union must primarily assume the responsibility to improve the conditions of the labourers themselves. The company has gained in credit by accepting these demands. The labourers now have to play their part.

This time I was able to take Mahadev along with me; hence, readers may expect a detailed description in his article.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-8-1925

40. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

Shravana Krishna 13 [*August 17, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter about subsisting on fruit. I have myself lived on dried and fresh fruits for some years and it did me no harm. I had at that time also given up salt. I cannot advise you to try this experiment. However, if you give up salt and ghee for a while it will certainly help you in cooling down your passions. It is essential to give up spices as well as pan and the like. One cannot subdue one's sex and allied passions merely with a restricted diet; an aspirant can least afford to do away with any

[1] The year is inferred from the reference to the addressee's wife.

of the accompanying observances. Absolute cessation of desire comes only after revelation of the Supreme. This is on the authority of the *Gita* and is quite true. You must read my book *Arogya Digdarshan*, if you haven't read it already. A Hindi translation was published years ago.

I hope you are now perfectly all right. I wish your wife peace.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6112. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

41. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Monday, August 17, 1925

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. I approve of the first plan but we have to think more about it. I hope to reach the Ashram on the 5th. I must return on the 9th. But during those four days it would be good if some of us got together. I am afraid that the happy ones would benefit from our leniency whereas the unhappy ones might be left out. The wheel will, we reckon, put an end to the misery of the unhappy people. Poverty is increasing, we believe, in Kathiawar. If that is not true, we will have to think over it again. We should keep two things in mind. We should make khadi so cheap that the poor too can wear it and those who are hard up for even one pice should be given the spinning-wheel and work. The third point is that even if we stop giving bonus after a certain period the work should not stop. We can only discuss all this only when we meet.

Fix whatever day you wish to, after talking to Vallabhbhai. If you wish to convene the Parishad Committee, you may do so.

The Franchise Committee has not yet met. The All-India Congress Committee will meet and do as they please. Jawahar is considering some of the suggestions. I hope to circulate the draft in a few days.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5725

42. *LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT*

Monday [August 17, 1925][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Owing to too much travelling at present, I forget to write nor have I the time. I know that you are calm, so I do not worry if I cannot write. Whether I write or not I expect your letter, in which you must give your diary.

Your health should now have improved a lot.

We start for Orissa tomorrow.

Blessings from

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 513. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

43. *SPEECH AT ROTARY CLUB*[2]

CALCUTTA,
August 18, 1925

After thanking the Rotarians for the delicate courtesy that they had extended to him in making their luncheon a Bengali widow's luncheon—a mere potato-and-cabbage luncheon—and for inviting him to speak to them on a subject which was perhaps as uninteresting as the menu spread before them, Mr. Gandhi said:

"Charkha" is not an inviting word though I see that your magazine is called *Charkha*. I did not know that this was an Indian word you had copied. That means charkha—a wheel. I have also come to represent the potency of the wheel, the spinning-wheel or the spindle I hold in my hand (showing a little instrument), and I have so often humorously said to my mill-owning friends that I propose to compete with them with this little spindle. But beyond that humour it has a seriousness all its own.

First of all, as to its economic value. You know that the surface of India is 1,900 miles long from north to south and 1,500

[1] Gandhiji left on his Orissa tour on August 18.

[2] Gandhiji was the chief guest and speaker at the Rotarians' meeting held in the Grand Hotel.

miles broad from east to west and it includes 700,000 villages over this vast surface. The majority of the villages are not served by any railway system at all. There was a time in India when the spinning-wheel was a supplementary occupation of this vast agricultural population. The present agricultural population of India as the Government statistics tell us is nothing less than 85 per cent. The Government statistics also tell us that this 85 per cent of the population of India has at least four months in the year absolutely idle. Some of them who are in the know tell me that in Bengal there are agriculturists who have nothing to do for six months in the year. You can imagine what will happen to a man who takes four months' or six months' holiday without pay. Not even the Viceroy of India can afford that vacation. Businessmen, I think, even though they may be millionaires never give themselves all that holiday and do no business. Much less can this vast agricultural population which the historian of India, the late Sir William Hunter, told us 30 years ago was living a hand-to-mouth existence. He said that one-tenth of the population of India was living on one meal only per day and that meal consisted of dry bread and a pinch of dirty salt. They did not know what milk or ghee was. Nor did they get any vegetables.

As you know, famine is chronic in India. It is a money famine. I suggest to you, as business people, that for such people a supplementary occupation is an absolute necessity, and if it is an absolute necessity it must fulfil certain conditions to apply to this vast mass of mankind. It must, therefore, be a universal occupation. It must be an occupation whose products can be easily taken over by the whole of the population. Therefore it will be idle to suggest that they should make articles of luxury. It must be one that they could easily learn. If it requires a good deal of skill or if the instrument of production requires a great manufacturing skill or if it was expensive, it would not answer.

Showing a small spindle in his hand Mr. Gandhi said that that little simple device could produce 50 yards of yarn per hour. A spinning-wheel on an average could give 400 yards per hour. The highest output of a spinning-wheel was 850 yards per hour. No mill spindle had yet produced 850 yards of 10 counts per hour. That could only be done by the human hand. What the mill could do was that thousands of spindles could be worked by a few women with a great power behind it. It was good, it had its place. He did not want to displace the machinery from its proper place. He ventured to suggest that for these few millions of peasantry of India there was no other cottage occupation of that universal character as the spinning-wheel. Any

body going to the villages would find some remnants of spinning-wheel. Women throughout the length and breadth of India were taking it up without the slightest difficulty because they were born to it. They knew what it was. But one other condition had to be fulfilled. Who would use the product of that wheel? Naturally the people of India, as they did 200 or even 100 years ago, when every Indian was clothed in garments spun by Indian women and woven by Indian weavers. The weaving industry had not died out entirely but the spinning industry had all died out and there was a reason for it. The spinning industry could not support a large body of people by itself. It could only be a supplementary industry and therefore there was not that resistance to its destruction which the weaving industry offered, for the simple reason that the weavers lived purely upon weaving as their sole occupation whereas the peasantry had their agriculture as the backbone. India imported Rs. 60 crore worth of foreign yarn and adding a similar quantity to it produced by local mills, they could easily imagine what it meant to a poor country like India whose average income, according to Lord Curzon, was in his time Rs. 30 to 33 per year. The late Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji calculated the average annual income to be Rs. 26. The late Mr. R. C. Dutt challenged Lord Curzon's figure, and Mr. Gandhi thought that it was successfully proved that Mr. Dadabhai's figure was more reliable and more correct. Even taking Lord Curzon's figure what did it signify? Less than Rs. 3 a month. If the spinning-wheel could add even Rs. 5 or Rs. 6 per year to their income, was it not a fortune to them? It was, said Mr. Gandhi. That was the economic aspect of the spinning-wheel. That would solve largely the problem of the economic distress. It would solve the problem of famine. It would solve the problem of poverty. People need not live on charity which must be shameful to the giver as well as to the taker who had his limbs unimpaired.

As for the spiritual aspect of the charkha, Mr. Gandhi said that it flowed naturally from the former. If they must industrialize India in the English and American fashion by covering it with factories, they could do with a small population but could not deal with a vast population in a summary fashion. He asked:

Do you want the people to congregate in boxes where men and women are huddled together in a manner which I could not picture to you. I save them from such an immorality by giving them this occupation. There is another spiritual aspect about it. A man is often known by his occupation. There is a great deal of truth in the proverb 'When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?' That was the time when men were really contented and there was real brotherhood.[1]

[1] The paragraph that follows is taken from Mahadev Desai's report in *Young India*, 27-8-1925.

If the mills made superfluous additions to the treasures of the already rich, the spinning-wheel was certainly spiritually superior to it inasmuch as it filled the pockets not of those who were already rich but of the starving and the needy millions.

I read with deep interest Drummond's book *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* long ago, and I am sure that if I had that writer's facile pen, I would demonstrate even better that there is a spiritual law in the natural world.

He had read books by sane men seriously advocating electrocution to end the race of the starving and the diseased and the infirm. It may be an eminently economical remedy, but it was not a human or a spiritual remedy. In the spinning-wheel he was offering to his countrymen a spiritual remedy, a remedy with which they had been familiar for ages, and a remedy which if seriously tried would save them from the hideous consequences that town and factory life involved. And need he say anything as to the spiritual reaction on the mind, of the simple instrument? Well so many who had tried it bore witness to the fact that it brought peace to the distracted and troubled mind, and the genius of Goethe had woven that effect into song for ages, when he represented Margaret spinning away at the wheel and through its inspiration spinning out of her lips a song as perfect as the yarn from the wheel. He was not an enemy of inventions, said he, clinching the argument, but as matter misplaced was dirt, all inventions misplaced were abominations, to be shunned if they did not add to human dignity and peace.

Questions were invited . . . Mr. A. T. Weston said that he gathered from Mr. Gandhi's observations that weaving was also necessary besides spinning. Why should not then mill-made yarn be used for weaving on a large scale? Mr. Gandhi replied that everyone of the millions of India could spin during their spare time but they could not weave in a similar manner. That was why he had placed the spinning-wheel in the forefront.[1]

Gandhiji had studiously avoided the political aspect of the spinning-wheel throughout his discourse, but Dr. Sarbadhikari, a Rotarian, who spoke last compelled him to do so. 'If the spinning-wheel', he asked in effect, 'had played such a large part in Hindu ritual and was a living thing in the Bengali home, how had it fallen into disuse? Is it not the cost of the product of the wheel which had driven it out?' That, said Gandhiji, involved the spiritual aspect too. If he had the authority of Queen Elizabeth he would deal with the question just as she had done. She made it criminal for her people to use Holland lace, and imported workmen from abroad to teach the people how to make lace, and interdicted the use of lace until then. He was

[1] What follows is from Mahadev Desai's report in *Young India*, 27-8-1925.

not an out-and-out free trader and he would if he could effectively stop all import of foreign cloth by heavy import duties. He said warming up:

And you have asked how the industry had died. Well it is a painful answer, but I must give it. *It was made to die.*

He could have narrated the whole blood-curdling tale which tarnished the record of East India Company, but he refrained.

It would make the blood of every honest man and woman boil to turn over the pages written not by Indians but by the servants of the Company. When I tell you that people had to cut off their thumbs in order to escape the terrorism let loose, you would understand the position.

The charkha was not living in every home, as Dr. Sarbadhikari had said, it had been killed, and it was now being revived. Every country had to organize its industries, and it did not matter if they had to pay more for their products in the beginning. 'Service before self' was the motto of the Club, and the speaker, reminding them of it, said:

You are trustees of the welfare of the people of India. You will have to put service before self and teach them to feel that they should not have Manchester Calico or mill-made cloth when they can make cloth in their own homes.

He instanced the competition between a foreign Steam Navigation Company and a British Company, where the former went the length of selling tickets almost free for deck passengers which once used to cost Rs. 91, and said:

Healthy industry cannot stand that competition. You will educate the world opinion against such immoral competition. I want fair competition, and no favour.

The Englishman, 19-8-1925

44. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Wednesday, Shravana Vad 15 [August 19, 1925]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. It is not that I wish you to be without bangles. I advise you to wear silver bangles. Just wearing rosewood bangles would not look nice. But there is no harm in wearing conch-shell bangles. I see that they are not cheap. I have already sent a reply as regards Dahyabhai. On the whole I feel Tibbia College would be good. But now I hope to reach there on the 5th September, so we shall discuss it when we meet.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 28

45. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Shravana Vad 15 [August 19, 1925][1]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I had your letters, but I did not write as there was nothing much to reply to.

I do not have time and moreover writing with the left hand takes double the time. I shall reach the Ashram on the 5th and start from there on the 9th. Meet me then.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI NARANDAS KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI
OPP. MIDDLE SCHOOL
NAVAPARA

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 6198. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] From the postmark

46. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

Shravana Krishna 15 [August 19, 1925][1]

BHAI BENARSIDASJI,

I had guessed from your language that you were angry. If you were not, I have nothing to say. Hope you are keeping well.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

PS.

I write this with my left hand as the right one aches.

PANDIT BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI
FIROZABAD
DIST. AGRA

From the Hindi original: G.N. 2557

47. WHY NOT SURRENDER COMPLETELY?

The following is a typical letter. It is signed by several No-changers.

> Your promise to place the whole Congress machinery at the disposal of the Swarajists in order to make it predominantly a political body must have shocked almost all the No-changers. Sir, what is the political programme in the first place? Was not non-co-operation programme a political one which you suspended last year? Why should you not renew it, in different form if wanted, to meet the present situation, created by the speech of Lord Birkenhead? You made a pact with the Swarajists last year. Did they faithfully work it out as promised at Belgaum? What obstructed them? You know that most of the No-changers did not like the pact but accepted it against their wishes for you. Now again you have thrown them overboard by your promise to the Swarajists without their previous consultation. Once accepted by you, it will have to be accepted by the No-changers though against their wishes. They are being dragged as it were.
>
> Is the Council programme the only political programme? Will Councils give strength to the country for civil disobedience or non-payment of taxes? Under your leadership, the Congress had become a working body and now you again want to turn it into a place for vocal protests for arm-chair politicians. Congress Committees are today at least

[1] From the postmark

spinning associations, khaddar depots or khaddar shops, but hereafter they will be nothing more than debating clubs.

You propose alternative franchise, money or self-spun yarn, but the Maharashtra party do not approve of it, nor do they approve of khaddar-wearing. They are going to raise an opposition against, and are sure, though not this year, next year, they will do away with that. They don't want your spinning association. Why not start it outside Congress and surrender completely to the Swarajists?

The writers forget that I do not claim to lead or have any party, if only for the reason that I seem to be constantly changing and shifting my ground. To me I seem to be constantly growing. I must respond to varying conditions, and yet remain changeless within. I have no desire to drag anybody. My appeal is continuously to the head and heart combined. At the forthcoming meeting I expect an open and unfettered discussion wherein my opinion should be counted as only one among the many that would be then expressed. I know that this would appear to many to be utterly nonsensical. But if I persist long enough in expressing my opinion freely, those who feel that they are being dragged will soon resist me. But, after all, what have I done save that I have truly gauged the mind of educated India? I do not wish violently to wrest the Congress from educated India. The latter must grow to the new thought, if such it is. It is not for those who have ceased to believe in the particular method of non-co-operation adopted in 1920 to give it a retrial or to find out a third thing. It is for those like me, who still believe in that form of non-co-operation, to demonstrate its present utility, so that the sceptics might veer round. But I must confess that I can present nothing in the shape of a fire-works display to those who came to non-co-operation, not with an inward conviction, but for the alluring promise it made of immediate deliverance. That deliverance in the way it was expected not having come, who shall blame them if they fall back upon the original programme, with such changes as it is capable of admitting? After all, those who have led an active political life in the old fashion, cannot possibly be expected to sit idle, whilst "dreamers" like me expect to evolve an intensely active programme out of a "harmless toy" like the spinning-wheel. They brought the Congress into being, and I must wait for their conversion before the Congress can become a purely spinning association.

I do not know what the Maharashtra party will or will not do. It is undoubtedly open to it or anybody else to oppose spin-

ning as an alternative franchise or the wearing of khaddar as part of the franchise. It is equally open to the others to insist on spinning and khaddar being retained. If we do not finally arrive at a practically unanimous agreement, no change is possible before the Congress session at Cawnpore. We may cavil, if we like, at people's opinions. That would be a sign of intolerance. Each one should have faith in his own programme and must be prepared to work it even single-handed if necessary.

Experience teaches me that there is room for both the programmes in the country,—for spinning and Council-entry. I must, therefore, whilst I retain my own views about Council-entry in the abstract, support those Council-goers who are likely to serve my ideals better, who have greater powers of resistance and greater faith in the wheel and khaddar. These are the Swarajists in general.

A spinning association does become a necessity under the new scheme. But it must be under the Congress patronage so long as the Congress continues to extend it. I have too great a regard for the Congress to want to do without it. It is the one institution that has weathered many a breeze fair or foul. It is the fruit of years of patient labour given to it by educated India. I shall wilfully do nothing to decrease its usefulness.

Lastly, let no one think anything to be a foregone conclusion at the forthcoming meeting of the A.I.C.C. It is the duty of every member to attend it and come to it with an open mind determined to exercise his or her independent judgment fearlessly and in the best interest of the country.

Young India, 20-8-1925

48. PUBLIC FUNDS

I have critics who see nothing but flaws in everything I say or do. I profit by their criticism sometimes. But I have also the good fortune to have friends who may be described as guardians of my virtue. They would have me to become a perfect man, and therefore, feel agitated when they think that I have erred, or am likely to err in anything I may say or do. One such well-wisher, whose caution has before now proved to be of the greatest value to me, writes to the following effect:

> Within my experience, you have been responsible for collecting subscriptions for several funds, such as for Jallianwala, Satyagraha Sabha,

> Swadeshi, Swaraj, and now you have fixed yourself up in Bengal for Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Are you satisfied that the previous funds have been well managed, and now the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund will also be properly managed? You owe it to the public to render a full explanation.

The correspondent might have added the Tilak Swaraj Fund, and also the Flood Relief Fund in the South.

The question is pertinent. Even in course of my collections for the Deshbandhu Memorial, those who have paid me handsomely have given me the caution. My general rule is that I never identify myself with any fund where I do not know those who are to operate upon it, and where I am not satisfied about their honesty. The first three funds were raised not by me, or on the strength of any reputation I possess, but they were raised by Mr. Banker, whom even then I knew well and who had a perfect right to use my name. I know, too, that he could have raised all the money that was received on the strength of his own undoubted reputation and service rendered. Fullest accounts were kept of the receipts and disbursements, and were published also, if my recollection serves me right. But, in any event, these are very small accounts.

I have referred to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, although my correspondent has not. I have heard repeated complaints about it. It was the biggest public fund ever raised. I have the clearest conscience about it. The closest scrutiny of the disposal of that fund will show that generally there has been no laxity about its administration, and that there have been far less losses than are incurred by commercial firms. The latter generally write off 10 p.c. as their book-debts. I have known big South African firms writing off so much as 25 p.c. as a normal thing. In the transactions on the Tilak Swaraj Fund, we have not lost anything near 10 p.c. I doubt if the total losses would amount to 2 p.c. The working treasurer insisted upon vouchers for everything. The accounts have been audited from time to time. They have been published. This is not to say that in some cases there has not been gross misappropriation by Congress workers who were entrusted with funds. This is inevitable where monies have to be disbursed through hundreds of channels. All that is possible is to ensure against the looseness or carelessness on the part of top men. The wonder to me is that, on the whole, it is possible to show as clean a record as we have.

Then take the Jallianwala Bagh Fund. Here, again, there is accurate account-keeping. The accounts have been published

also from time to time. The place is well looked after. Pandit Malaviyaji may be considered to be the soul of that fund. The place is kept beautifully clean, and from a dung-heap it has been turned into a garden. Complaints, however, have been made that no fitting memorial has yet been raised, and the money is allowed to lie idle. If it is a charge, I must confess that I am perhaps more answerable for it than the others. Even plans have been prepared, but I felt that conditions of the time when the fund was raised were altered immediately after. The Bagh itself has been, in some way or other, a bone of contention between different parties. I do not know that we have seen the last of it. The Memorial was to be, as it should be, a memorial of solid communal unity—a triumph out of a tragedy. Hindu, Mussalman and Sikh blood that flowed on that fateful 13th in a mingled stream was to signify an unbreakable union. Where is that union today? It will be time to think of building a memorial when we stand united. For the present, so far as I am concerned, it is enough that the Bagh stands, as a little bit of a lung in crowded Amritsar, with its narrow, tortuous and dirty lanes.

Now, I come to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. The treasurer of the fund is a host in himself. But I know that he will not be forever possessed of it. It will ultimately vest in the trustees. The five original trustees are nominees of the deceased patriot. Every one of them has a status in society, and a reputation to lose. Some of them are monied men. These five original trustees have added two more. They are, again, men connected not with one public trust but many. One of them, Sir Nilratan Sircar, is the premier physician of Calcutta, and the other, Mr. S. R. Das, the first cousin of the deceased, is the Advocate-General of Bengal. If these seven trustees are not capable of rendering a good account of themselves, and doing justice to the trust reposed in them, I should despair of any trust succeeding in India. The mansion is there, and I know that Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, another medical trustee and a physician of the first rank is busy evolving plans for putting it to the use for which it is intended. It has been whispered to me that possibly Mr. S. R. Das, being the Advocate-General of Bengal, cannot be trustee. I do not know the law in the matter. I knew that he was Advocate-General of Bengal when he undertook the trust; but if it is an oversight, there will be a trustee appointed in his place who will be equal in reputation to him. If Mr. S. R. Das can remain a trustee, I was privileged to know enough of him to be able to assure the readers that he will neglect nothing to make the administration of the trust a thorough success. Up to the

moment of his departure for England, it occupied his care and attention. But I feel sure that every one of the original trustees will be as jealous of the memory of the deceased as any can be, and that they will make the proposed hospital and nurses' training institution worthy of his memory. So much for the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

About the All-India Memorial Fund, I am myself one of the trustees. The object of the Memorial is nearest to my heart. My fellow-trustees are as well known to the public as any public men. The Secretary is a seasoned soldier, and so is the treasurer, both respectively Secretary and Treasurer of the Congress also.

Let me, however, in conclusion, warn the public that the safety of the public fund lies more even in an intelligent vigilance of the public than in the strict integrity of those who are in charge of funds. Absolute honesty of the trustees is a necessity, but public inertia is a crime. Ignorant criticism must not be mistaken for intelligent vigilance. What I have found generally is ignorant criticism. What I would love to see is, that some public men, with a knowledge of account-keeping, make it a point, now and again, of overhauling the administration of public funds, and bringing the administrators to book.

Young India, 20-8-1925

49. *FOR CHRISTIAN INDIANS*

[The other day[1] I was privileged to address what was to be a meeting of Christian Indians predominantly, but what turned out to be a meeting of European Christians predominantly. My address, therefore, took naturally a different shape from what it was to be. Nevertheless, I give below a brief summary of portions of the address, as, in my opinion, it is of interest to know what one who has lived in their midst, amid various scenes and surroundings, has thought about and felt for them. M. K. G.]

When I was a youth, I remember a Hindu having become a convert to Christianity. The whole town understood that the initiation took the shape of this well-bred Hindu partaking of beef and brandy in the name of Jesus Christ and discarding his national costume. I learnt in later years, that such a convert, as so many of my missionary friends put it, came to a life of freedom out of a life of bondage, to a life of plenty out of one of penury. As I wander

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Meeting of Christians", 4-8-1925.

about throughout the length and breadth of India I see many Christian Indians almost ashamed of their birth, certainly of their ancestral religion, and of their ancestral dress. The aping of Europeans on the part of Anglo-Indians is bad enough, but the aping of them by Indian converts is a violence done to their country and, shall I say, even to their new religion. There is a verse in the New Testament to bid Christians avoid meat if it would offend their neighbours. Meat here, I presume, includes drink and dress. I can appreciate uncompromising avoidance of all that is evil in the old, but where there is not only no question of anything evil but where an ancient practice may be even desirable, it would be a crime to part with it when one knows for certain that the giving up would deeply hurt relatives and friends. Conversion must not mean denationalization. Conversion should mean a definite giving up of the evil of the old, adoption of all the good of the new and a scrupulous avoidance of everything evil in the new. Conversion, therefore, should mean a life of greater dedication to one's own country, greater surrender to God, greater self-purification. Years ago I met the late Kali Charan Banerjee. Had I not known before I went there that he was a Christian, I should certainly not have noticed from the outward appearance of his home that he was one. It was no different from an ordinary modern Hindu home,—simple and meagre in furniture. The great man was dressed like an ordinary un-Europeanized Hindu Bengali. I know that there is a marvellous change coming over Christian Indians. There is on the part of a large number of them a longing to revert to original simplicity, a longing to belong to the nation and to serve it, but the process is too slow. There need be no waiting. It requires not much effort, but I was told, and even as I write, I have a letter from a Christian Indian before me telling me that he and his friends find it difficult to make the change, because of the opposition of their superiors. Some of them tell me that they are even jealously watched, and any movement on their part to identify themselves with national movements is strongly condemned. The late Principal Rudra and I used often to discuss this evil tendency. I well remember how he used to deplore it. I am offering a tribute to the memory of a dead friend when I inform the reader that he used often to express his grief that it was too late in life for him to change some of the unnecessary European habits to which he was brought up. Is it not truly deplorable that many Christian Indians discard their own mother tongue, bring up their children only to speak in English? Do they not thereby completely cut themselves adrift from the nation in whose midst they have to live?

But they may answer in self-defence that many Hindus and even Mussalmans have become denationalized. The *tu quoque* argument serves no useful purpose. I am writing not as a critic but as a friend who has enjoyed for the past thirty years the closest intimacy with hundreds of Christian Indians. I want my missionary friends and Christian Indians to reciprocate the spirit in which these lines are written. I write in the name and for the sake of heart-unity which I want to see established among the people of this land professing different faiths. In nature there is a fundamental unity running through all the diversity we see about us. Religions are no exception to the natural law. They are given to mankind so as to accelerate the process of realization of fundamental unity.

Young India, 20-8-1925

50. NOTES

A Declaration on Swaraj

An esteemed correspondent has sent me a letter which is so well reasoned and otherwise able that, in spite of my inability to agree with all that is said in it, I should like to publish it. But the correspondent has himself advanced very cogent reasons for non-publication of the major, and the most interesting, part of his letter. The burden of the letter is to prove to me that my insistence on Hindu-Muslim unity and the manner of achieving it, have really resulted, at least for the time being, in an ever-growing estrangement. He then advises me not to harp upon it any longer and then ends the letter thus:

> Now that you know the unexpected results of these acts of commission and omission on your part, let me request you to declare in the most public and unmistakable way that the swaraj you are immediately aiming at for your country is a (modern) democratic raj or government, that the State shall not take note of men's religious beliefs, that there shall be 'no compulsion in religion', that no one shall be debarred from doing anything or going anywhere merely because of his or her birth (as an 'untouchable', 'unapproachable', 'unseeable', or 'unhearable'), and that *equality of opportunity to all* shall be the motto of the State, including, as a necessary corollary, the policy of *special encouragement to the poor and the backward* of all creeds and communities in accordance with their needs and in proportion to their poverty and backwardness the manner and the degree of the encouragement to be judged on the merits of each individual case and *not* by the accident of birth or the fact of creed alone or at all, or, in short, that a 'free field' to every citizen in his or her

life—and no favour nor handicap by reason of birth or creed—shall be the immutable rule for the State in every department to follow.

Secure the acceptance of these principles by the chief communal leaders and you shall have more than half won the battle of unity among the children of *Madar-i-Hind*. But as regards the declaration I have mentioned, you owe it to yourself and to your deluded Hindu and Muslim fellow-countrymen. It would be well if you got the Brothers Ali, too, to make such a declaration on behalf of the Khilafatists.

I have anticipated the advice of the correspondent about Hindu-Muslim unity. I agree that it will do no good for me to be speaking upon it, as I used to. I am satisfied with letting my action speak for itself. So far as the declaration about swaraj is concerned, I accept the advice in full and ask the reader to regard the declaration suggested by the correspondent as my own.

A TRAVELLING CHARKHA

The travelling wheel of the Khadi Pratishthan has solved the question of providing an efficient travelling spinning-wheel. I have been using one for the last three months with the greatest satisfaction. It yields as much to me as the ordinary charkha. I therefore use the same thing, whether at home or travelling. I have been able to use it in a moving train also. It is lighter than the ordinary wheel, and the principle of construction is the same. Success has been attained by making the wheel collapsible. When it is put away, it is an elegant and handy little box, capable of being carried without any effort. Its dimensions when packed up are 16″×6″×6″ and the weight is 7 lb. The wheel is made of steel wires. It takes no more than two to three minutes to put it up, and no more to pack it up. By suspending the spindle inside the uprights, rather than the outside, the motion becomes perfectly noiseless and easier. There is also less danger of the spindle being bent. Holders are made of pieces of gut collected out of the breakage of carding guts and, therefore, cost nothing. The guts are held in position by wedges being driven from outside into the receiving poles made in the uprights. The box can accommodate an oil can, simple tools, slivers, etc. The price of this wheel is Rs. 15. Satis Babu informs me that it is possible for him to supply a few only of these charkhas at a time. I bring it to the notice of the readers only for the sake of those who would not suspend their spinning while travelling. I meet so many who give their constant travelling as an excuse for not spinning. This travelling wheel removes any such ground for excuse.

Young India, 20-8-1925

51. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

[*August 20, 1925*][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Stay in peace at the Ashram. Let me know where you are staying. I have not seen Navibunder but I can draw a mental picture of it. Today I am in Cuttack. I have come to see the tannery. Mahadev and Satis Babu are with me. You must make a complete recovery. I am certain if you stay at Hajira you will be completely all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Now we shall meet soon. I shall reach there on the 5th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9217

52. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

August 20, 1925

BHAI MATHURADAS,

I was very pleased on reading your letter in which you own up your mistake. This weakness is common. Decisive speech is for him only who never speaks without thinking and who speaks only when it is absolutely necessary. One should use language as sparingly as a miser. Everything will be well since you are firm about it. Today I am in Cuttack and have some leisure, so I am disposing of all pending letters such as yours.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3725

1 From the postmark

53. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

[*August 20, 1925*][1]

BHAI KALYANJI,

I have read your letter to Mahadev. If Parvati wants to see Pragji, she may do so. Does Pragji spin? I would like you to leave Surat and settle in Bardoli. Most certainly open a school. It will be of use if you can run it on your conditions. Here is the message for *Navayug*:

"What message can I send to the Gujaratis? Let Gujarat work at the spinning-wheel, wear khadi, discard foreign cloth and then ask: 'What shall we do now?' When the first railway line was laid, there was an obstacle. There was a deep trench. If that could be filled up the railway line could be laid. The engineer said: 'Fill up the trench'. It could not be filled up in any way. The men who were trying to fill it up got tired and asked, 'What shall we do now'? 'Fill up the trench,' was the reply received again. They tried but could not fill it up. They asked: 'What now?' Once more they got the reply 'Fill up the trench'. So again basketfuls of rubbish were dumped into it. At last the trench was filled. Stevenson became immortal. I also want to be immortal. So I tell you only one thing: 'Spin and wear khadi'."

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: G.N. 2677

54. INTERVIEW TO "THE ENGLISHMAN"

August 21, 1925

In connection with Dr. Abdulla Suhrawardy's resignation from the Swaraj Party, Mr. Gandhi who returned to Calcutta from Cuttack on Friday morning was interviewed by a representative of *The Englishman*. Questioned as to whether he would enlighten the public as to Dr. Suhrawardy's resignation, Mr. Gandhi replied:

All I can say is that I am surprised at the resignation. Evidently, all of Dr. Suhrawardy's grievance is purely against me, but

[1] From the postmark

I am not a member of the Swaraj Party. He may express all the resentment that he wishes to against me regarding the opinion that I gave at the meeting to which I was invited. But that was my own personal opinion.

So far as I am concerned, I still hold that it was wrong on his part, as it would be wrong on the part of any member of the Swaraj Party, to see His Excellency the Governor on the eve of an election which was to be contested on party lines, and in which one like Dr. Suhrawardy stood as the party candidate.

I do not think that anyone at that meeting questioned the right of any member to enjoy the most intimate social relations with His Excellency the Governor or any political opponent, but, if the worthy Doctor's visit was social, the time chosen for it was inopportune and unfortunate.

We are fighting a bureaucracy which is resourceful and, I venture to say, unscrupulous.

I know cases in which Government officials have resorted to temptation, threats and other kinds of pressure to induce men to act against what they knew to be the country's interest.

I cannot, therefore, help saying that it is a healthy rule to prohibit members of the Swaraj Party from meeting or seeing officials without the permission of the Party. Many things have been known to take place at so-called social functions, but, as I have said, this is my personal opinion which the Swaraj Party may or may not endorsé.

If it is not too late for Dr. Suhrawardy, I would strongly advise him to be content with venting his anger against me, and to remain in the Party to which he has professed loyalty, especially after the death of the Deshbandhu, whose memory he rightly reveres.

The Englishman, 22-8-1925

55. *MY NOTES*

TO THE RESIDENTS OF KUTCH

As I have promised to go to Kutch, residents of Kutch have been asking me about the time of my visit and what are my expectations there. I have been eager to go there ever since I gave the promise. One of the reasons for my eagerness is that I have never been to Kutch, though I have all along wanted to go there. The second reason is that a promise is like a debt, which should be discharged at the earliest opportunity. However, I do not think

that I shall now be able to go there before November or perhaps even January.[1] I had expressed this fear even when making the promise. I have to go to Bihar in September or October. After that the Southern provinces remain and so too some others. I shall visit whichever of these I can. If that can be postponed, I could go to Kutch in November or December. If this is not possible, it will of course have to be in January.

Now as to my expectations.

I have of course to collect funds for the All-India Deshbandhu Spinning-wheel Memorial. I entertain very high hopes regarding the contribution of Kutch.

I shall also expect not to find anyone there clad in anything but khadi.

I shall expect that there will be no contempt for untouchables there.

I shall expect to see clean schools for these people.

I shall expect Hindu-Muslim unity.

I shall expect to hear *Ramanam* being chanted in every Hindu home.

I shall expect to find that there is a feeling of love between the Ruler and his subjects and that the latter are happy.

I shall expect to find the women clad in pure khadi and having the same steadfastness as Sita.

THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE "PANCH"[2]

Having seen my advice on taking legal steps in cases where the funds of khadi boards were misappropriated by the members of the Congress itself, a gentleman suggests that justice should be sought through the good offices of the *panch* and also that the idea of the *panch* should be propagated among the people. The idea underlying the *panch* is very dear to me, but those who have been guilty are not likely to accept the verdict of the *panch*. A thief, one finds, yields to punishment; so does a rogue. There is no element of non-violence in letting off either of these types because of our lack of strength. Society has not reached a stage where the practice of punishing persons can be given up. Today, such non-violence seems to be possible only for individuals. Even among individuals, only those who have altogether renounced material possessions can afford to give up all recourse to punishments. In the

[1] Gandhiji, however, managed to go to Kutch on October 22, 1925; his Kutch tour lasted thirteen days.

[2] Board of arbitration; literally a group of five

present case, both those who borrowed money and those who stood guarantee for them have failed to repay the sums borrowed from the Khadi Board. The Board has only one way open to it, and that is to recover the amount even by going to a court of law. A realistic interpretation of the *Gita* too leads to the same conclusion. Of what use was the *smashan panditya*[1] to Arjuna who had used weapons throughout his life? The very fact that he made preparations for the battle showed that he had to fight it. It was his dharma to fight and defend the faith of his age. Similarly, as soon as the Khadi Board lent out public funds it became its dharma to recover the sums by taking the guarantors, etc., to a court of law if the latter proved unworthy. The idea of the *panch* can only function where both parties are prepared to respect its decision. That respect is as good as non-existent now. In this case all that we can do is to go to the law-courts, always being prepared to abide by decisions of the *panch* and making efforts to re-establish the institution. However, before the idea of the *panch* is generally accepted, many individuals will have to practise penance and purify themselves. Let us do this to the best of our ability.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 23-8-1925

56. ONE OF THE OWNERS

I meant it when I said that the subscribers of *Navajivan* should regard themselves as its owners. In order to prove this I shall publish here a letter from one such 'owner', after sorting out his questions, because he is an 'owner', and give a reply.

> In spite of the Navajivan Trust having saved Rs. 50,000, in comparison with other newspapers and so far as its subscribers were concerned, is it not unfair that these subscribers were given no direct benefit out of this? Every daily, weekly or monthly gives away some literature annually as gifts, why should not *Navajivan* do likewise and give a substantial gift?

Every periodical has its own point of view. The *Navajivan* does not enter into competition with anyone. It is not published for anyone's personal benefit. Its income is derived soely from its subscriptions. It does not wish to continue its existence by tempting people with gifts. It is prepared to cease publication if intrinsical-

[1] Other-worldly philosophy; literally, cremation-ground learning

ly it is not sufficiently rewarding to the readers. I do not wish to express verbally my disapproval of the policy pursued by ordinary newspapers but I would rather place before them an object-lesson by acting in the very opposite direction within my humble capacity. Would the subscribers of *Navajivan* be satisfied by partaking in this experiment? Let the *Navajivan* set an object-lesson even for those subscriber-owners who are not so satisfied.

The History of the Satyagraha in South Africa was published as a supplement to *Navajivan*[1] and later published in the form of a book. Rather than this, would it not have been better if in the very first instance the book had been published and presented to the subscribers or offered to them at a reduced price?

In the first place, *Navajivan* is published on cheap paper; besides, as the supplement also contains other matter, the portion containing the history could not be separated from the rest. Only readers of *Navajivan* would have the advantage of reading it, the pages would get crumpled if many people read it and it would not remain in a fit condition to be filed. If instead a book were brought out, many people could read it. Only a handful of persons read the *Navajivan*, but many would like to read a book and yet a book would not get crumpled. It could be read at any time. The more it is read, the more would people come to know of it. In spite of this why is there such parsimony and lack of foresight in an institution which is run under your control? How difficult it is for one with a meagre income like myself to incur this double expense! Has the ideal of supplying good literature at low prices been adhered to here?

The History of the Satyagraha in South Africa has not been completely written. Only a few chapters were written in prison.[2] I spare some time for this purpose and write a chapter each week for the readers of *Navajivan*. If I had intended to publish it in book form in the very first instance, I would not to this day have been able to present anything to the public. Moreover, its price would have been higher. The poorest readers of *Navajivan* read it in libraries. Some share a copy with others. A gentleman supplies some poor persons with copies at a reduced price or even free of charge. This correspondent should carefully preserve his own copy and have it bound himself. The ability to preserve the smallest things with care is included among the fine characteristics of virtuous

[1] From April 1924 onwards; it was published in book form in 1924-25, in Gujarati.

[2] Yeravda Central Prison, Poona, where Gandhiji was imprisoned from March 1922 to February 1924

poverty. *Navajivan* is thrifty to the extent that some people work for it, spending money out of their own pockets.

What, however, should be said to this owner? He buys *Navajivan* and is content with merely reading it. Some owners add to their wealth; others lose it. Some promote morality, others help its decline. Some make you laugh, others make you cry; some pull you towards swaraj, others push you towards foreign rule. It is clear that the ownership of *Navajivan* brings no wealth. It is clear on the other hand that its ownership makes the subscribers poorer. But is there anything surprising in this? Should I not be regarded as its principal owner? I have to buy stamps from other departments for posting articles for *Navajivan*. Sometimes, I have to send even telegrams. I can give at least this assurance to the subscribers that I have to spend more than what they do. And, I am not the only one who has to do so. My other colleagues are also in a similar predicament. And is it not sufficient that one applies the same rule to oneself that one applies to others? The subscribers have no more responsibility after paying the annual subscription. What, however, is the plight of the honorary manager-*cum*-proprietor? To buy *Navajivan* is to take the road of swaraj, to chant the praises of the spinning-wheel. To sell it is to deal in truth and non-violence. I have no desire, whatsoever, to offer other temptations in order to find subscribers.

> You say that *Navajivan* is not a means of making money. Its readers must regard themselves as its proprietors. These, however, are only your ideas. Should they be not put into practice? Does saving Rs. 50,000 not amount to making money? If in spite of this, the subscribers do not get any benefit from it, what then is the meaning of proprietorship? Is this not doing injustice to those who subscribe to *Navajivan*, by cutting down other expenses?

I still maintain that *Navajivan* is not a means of making money. Fifty thousand rupees may be regarded as money earned if the organizers make use of that amount. There are five thousand subscribers of *Navajivan* today; previously there were 30,000. If *Navajivan* can attract the same number of subscribers again, I would not reduce its price but rather resume using the one pice saved per subscriber for public welfare and look upon its subscriber-owners as having gained something in this way.

> Actually the 'Prakashan Mandir'[1] owes a debt of gratitutde to *Navajivan*. Would you please accept it as a fact that the former is there-

[1] Navajivan Publishing House

fore indirectly grateful to the subscribers of *Navajivan*? Despite this, why should there be such a preferential treatment that books published by the Mandir should be given to its customers at a reduced price, while subscribers of *Navajivan* should have to pay a higher price? Why should we also not get at reduced price the books that we require? What fault have those persons committed who have been subscribing to *Navajivan* continuously for the last six years?

I did not conceive the plan of having cheap publications. The manager[1] of the press conceived it, although it is being carried out with my approval. Such publishing activity would certainly appeal to me. When the press had less work to do for the weeklies, this scheme came into being with the idea that it would have at least some work in its spare time. In doing so, the press receives payment at the market rate and, in return, undertakes to shoulder the entire responsibility free of any charge; the subscribers of *Navajivan* do not have to do so. Consequently, it is but proper that only those who are the customers of the Mandir get the benefit of the reduced price. Those who have been subscribing to *Navajivan* for the last six years have gained a lot by way of the weekly reading material they get.

Shall I tell you of how I was deceived like the client of a lawyer of Lyallpur?[2] I was cheated only because of the appeal in *Navajivan* to encourage the Swadeshi Bhandar, Ltd., in Nadiad. It is a mistake to believe that your son is like you and so be deceived, but, how could one disbelieve the facts that are mentioned in your newspaper? I bought five shares of Rs. 10/- each. A poor person like me invested half his capital in it with a view to encourage swadeshi and at the same time earn some interest on it. What was the result of this? Let alone receiving an interest, although it is three years since the company was liquidated I have not yet recovered a single pie. In spite of having written as many as three times to Master Co. and the Bhandar I have received no reply as to how the liquidation has proceeded. I wrote a letter appealing to Gokuldas Talati in this connection, yet he too did not reply to it. Do you regard it as proper that the liquidators of the Bhandar thus refrain from giving a reply and even a person like Shri Talati does not look into the matter and send a reply? Have you nothing to say to them? How shall we be able to get on if we do not have even this much organizational responsibility and honest intention? Just as *Navajivan* had published an appeal for the Bhandar, could it not after looking into the affair explain who was to blame for the liquidation,

[1] Swami Anandanand

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXVII, pp. 259-62.

whether there was any mismanagement and whether the organizers or others thought only of filling their own purses?

I do not know of the circumstances of the Nadiad Swadeshi Bhandar. If that Bhandar has gone into liquidation, if it has been guilty of dishonesty and if I had given a testimonial to it, I was undoubtedly a party to the sin. It indicates my lack of knowledge. I have often admitted that I am liable to err. If the number of times that I have proved to be correct adds up to more than the number of my mistakes, what I say should to that extent carry weight. The better way is not to rely on testimonials given by others but to trust one's own experience. However, as this is not always possible, the world will be led to believe in testimonials and be deceived sometimes. I do not know if any fraud has been practised in the Nadiad Bhandar. I invite the organizers to give an explanation. I do not even know what kind of a certificate I gave it. I do not carry files along with me on my tours.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 23-8-1925

57. *TEMPLES FOR THE UNTOUCHABLES*

I have already expressed my views regarding temples for the untouchables. In my opinion the value of all temples is determined by the penance that underlies them. For instance, if a licentious or cruel man builds temples at various places in order to help or hide his sins, they do not acquire sanctity because they have the name or form of temples. As against this, if a few devout persons put in their own labour, build a hut of mud and straw, install an image and constantly meditate there, this would be a place of pilgrimage as compared to the jewel-studded edifice called a temple raised by the loose liver. Following the same line of thought, I believe that temples for the untouchables would be worth while only if our untouchable brothers contributed the largest share in the form of labour, in building these. I gave such advice to our untouchable brothers and sisters in Lathi[1] and they have acted on it too. They contributed money and ornaments at that very meeting. I suggested the following conditions: The State should contribute a sum equal to that collected by our untouchable brothers. I should raise an amount equal to these two amounts

[1] A small town in Saurashtra; then capital of a princely State

put together. A trust should be formed for the temple, consisting of one trustee representing the untouchables, one representing the State and a third representing me. If this is done the temple would have a good organization, some sentiment would attach to it and our untouchable brothers would have the facility to practise their faith. The facility for a school, etc., in the temple was also kept in view. I hope that the untouchable brothers of Lathi have not given up efforts begun by them.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-8-1925

58. MORE QUESTIONS

The correspondent who has posed the question appearing in today's leading article has also, in that very letter, asked some other separate questions which I quote below:

> Was it not a mistake on the part of Pandit Malaviyaji not to accept the offer held out by the State of Alwar, allowing him to carry out alone an independent inquiry? Is it not unworthy of a leader of the status of Panditji to forgo the opportunity for investigation that was granted to him, by being cowed down because of the financial assistance offered by the State, relinquishing one's duty and hesitating to show his courage publicly?

What I wrote about Panditji was based on what I had read in the newspapers. The correspondent has hastily formed a wrong opinion. Panditji did not get permission to go and investigate in Alwar. The officials of the Alwar Ruler have acted much like General Dyer and the Ruler, by preventing a public inquiry, has acted in an autocratic manner and has taken the shine out of his crown. Panditji is not such a coward as to forgo the opportunity for investigating if it is given to him. No one should imagine even in his dreams that Panditji would sell his soul for the sake of money.

> I find the following suggestion of yours to be improper, viz., that a husband and wife should tolerate each other's dharma even if they are opposed and in order to do so the husband should even get foreign clothes for her. If the wife disobeys the husband, under what law should the latter obey the former? In the case of a reformed couple who drink liquor, if the husband gives it up later and asks his wife to do likewise, should he obtain it for her if she refuses to give it up? You yourself have often compared burning of foreign cloth with giving up liquor, why then

do you give such advice? Is this not the very opposite of knowledge? The husband may possibly get for her Indian mill-made clothes but certainly not foreign ones.

The dharma of the husband and the wife towards each other is full of perils. A Hindu husband seems to think that a wife is a chattel. I have heard monster-like husbands referring to the wives as their property. What should we say to those who claim that the wife should immediately understand and put into practice any changes made by the husband in his way of life?

Does not the wife have an individuality too?

Damayanti[1] had it, Mirabai[2] showed that she too had. The dharma of a married couple is not an easy one. The children of a suppressed woman would also be likewise suppressed. A devotee of khadi has to tolerate the foreign clothes of others; he should similarly tolerate those of his wife. Supposing my wife and I are meat-eaters; later I become purified and give up meat. Must my wife, therefore, give it up too? Or, should I persuade her and reason with her, asking her to give it up? Supposing I force her to give it up and later crave for meat, should my wife start eating meat again? How is widowhood any worse than having one's husband alive under such circumstances? Even Mandodari[3], who was the wife of a demon enjoyed freedom. Draupadi used to scold the Pandavas. Even a husband like Bhima[4] became meek in front of Draupadi. What could we not say of Sita's husband? Rama was worshipped because of Sita. No force can be used in the matter of dharma. Dharma is like the edge of a sword. Shri Krishna's words "what action should one perform" should be construed as "what dharma should one pursue". Even the poets, that is learned men, have yielded to the fascination of searching for its import. I am a true devotee of khadi and yet believe that I have no right to force my wife to take to khadi. The mutual love of husband and wife is not something gross. Through it one gets a glimpse of the love of the soul for God. Such love can never be sensual. Only animals yield to their senses. We call it animal behaviour. Force has no place where there is pure

[1] Wife of King Nala, in *Mahabharata*

[2] A sixteenth-century saint-poetess of Rajasthan

[3] Wife of Ravana, the demon king of Lanka, in the *Ramayana*

[4] One of the five Pandavas in *Mahabharata*

love. Where there is pure love each respects the beliefs of the other and both go forward on the path of dharma.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-8-1925

59. LETTER TO NANABHAI ICHCHHARAM MASHRUWALA

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
Bhadra Sud 4 [*August 23, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. I shall surely go there whenever I find time. Whether or no the country does something, we must keep on doing our work. That is the easiest way of educating people. The conduct of the Amravati lawyers only betrays our weakness.

I shall definitely go over when I find time. But I at present have no moment to spare; so I am helpless. Invitations continue to pour in from many quarters, but I can accept none.

Tell me of everything that happens there.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 1170a. Courtesy: Sushilaben Gandhi

[1] The year is deduced from the fact that in 1925 Gandhiji was in Calcutta, staying at 148, Russa Road.

60. LETTER TO SUDHIR RUDRA

148, RUSSA ROAD,
CALCUTTA,
August 25, 1925

MY DEAR SUDHIR,

As my left hand refuses to work, I am dictating this little note. Charlie Andrews tells me that you are moody and have given way to grief. It is unworthy of Sushil Rudra's son. If father is no more with us in body, is he not with us in the spirit and possibly more so? Let us all translate into our own lives all his noblest qualities and we need not grieve over the dissolution of the body.

With love,

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From the typewritten original: C.W. 6094. Courtesy: Mrs. Rajmohini Rudra

61. SPEECH AT Y.M.C.A., CALCUTTA[1]

August 25, 1925

At a meeting of the College Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association, Calcutta, Gandhiji was called upon to speak, last month, on a subject he had not thought of before. There was evidently some misunderstanding. He was under the impression that he had to speak on 'Village Organization' whereas he was asked to speak on 'Value and Possibility of Personality' a subject which puzzled him a little. But he came to a compromise and spoke on the subject of the evening incidentally touching on the subject of village organization too.

If personality meant character, as he had no doubt it did, then almost anyone could be got to address on the value of character. Bhartrihari, king, philosopher and poet rolled into one, thus summed up the power of character: 'What will not *satsang* do for a man?'

Character should be lived into one's own life. He who places purity of public life before anything else and say that a nation which disregarded purity

[1] Admission for the meeting, held in the Overtoun Hall, was by tickets and the gate money was donated to the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Rev. Dr. W. S. Urquhart presided.

of public life was doomed to perdition. Village organization seemed a simple word, but it meant the organization of the whole of India, inasmuch as India was predominantly rural. Sir Henry Maine had left a work on Village Communities which everyone might treasure. He had shown to India and to the world that the village life of India today was what it was five thousand years ago, which did not imply that the Indians were barbarous. On the contrary, the writer had made it clear that the Indian village life had so much vitality and character that it had persisted all these long years and weathered many a storm. He had described these villages as so many village republics completely self-contained, having all that one may want—schools, arbitration boards, sanitation boards, and no Poor Law, indeed, but ample provision for the relief of the poor.

He had also shown the treasures of art that the genius of the Indian villager had produced. The villager then learnt from his parents by word of mouth all the wisdom that he should learn. In daily contact with people, he was able to realize the value and possibility of personality. To him the village headman was a personality in himself. He was not the impostor of today; he was the servant of the people whom they could go to in times of difficulties, whom every child in the village knew and loved. He was incorruptible, he was a gentleman. But such a one was a rare bird today. The speaker asked with a sigh:

> What has come over this land that all these beautiful things are not to be found anywhere, that instead of those self-contained villages of a few hundred years ago we find villages dependent for their very necessities of life on Lancashire or Japan?

The whole village life was broken. People were dying by millions of malaria, hookworm and other diseases, all brought about by insanitation, deep poverty, sloth and idleness. What created this disruption and brought about this downfall? One might search the records of the East India Company and see for oneself how ruthlessly the village system was broken up by means mainly foul. Men who had served the East India Company had left imperishable records of how injustice, bribery and corruption reigned supreme in those days, and how relentlessly the handicrafts of India were ruined. A famine or a flood left the villagers absolutely destitute. But why should a village flooded be absolutely stranded and compelled to live on charity? The speaker had known the effects of flood in South Africa. There no relief was necessary. They had not to be fed by the State. They had cottage occupations. They worked. They had savings to fall back upon. Here there was no occupation save agriculture, no work and no savings, unemployment for four months and even six months in the year in the villages of Bengal. That was a problem, before village organizers and in the solution of that problem, the speaker said, the power of personality could be made to be felt. Summing up, the speaker said:

I say go with your character to the villages and express it through some loving act of service or kindness. It will be instinctively understood and responded to. Let any young man who has a character to save venture out to the villages and he will get a response. But he will have to be patient and truthful. There is no character where there is no patience and truth and gentleness and humility. He will not go out as a patron saint of the villages, he will have to go in humility with a broom-stick in his hand. There is a Trinity of Evil—insanitation, poverty and idleness—that you will have to be faced with and you will fight them with broom-sticks, quinine and castor oil and, if you will believe me, with the spinning-wheel. But all these will not help you without character. You must come down from your high pedestals, stoop to conquer, take the risk of catching malaria yourself. This work will give you all the satisfaction that your soul can desire. It will enrich the villagers' life and your life.

Young India, 17-9-1925

62. *INTERVIEW TO INDIAN PSYCHO-ANALYTICAL SOCIETY*[1]

CALCUTTA,
August 26, 1925

Mr. Gandhi agreed whole-heartedly about "the unconscious factor", but he thought that the suggestion put forward by Major Berkeley Hill would not have the desired effect. He thought that cow killing was not the most important factor. There were many more factors involved in the problem, all of which could [not] be tackled from the stand-point of "the unconscious". The problem should be taken up by individual workers with reference to different

[1] The members of the Society met Gandhiji at 148, Russa Road, at 3.30 p.m. Earlier they had sent him the text of a lecture by Major Owen Berkely Hill, Superintendent of the Ranchi European Mental Hospital, who had observed that the efforts hitherto made in uniting the Hindus and Muslims had failed because "the unconscious factor" involved in the problem had been neglected. The cow in his opinion was a "totem" for the Hindus, and as such was the repository of unconscious ambivalent feelings. When a cow was killed a large amount of his repressed emotion was let loose and was responsible for the trouble. He suggested that if a suitable symbolic animal could be devised, and if Hindus and Muslims could meet on a common platform, and participate in the sacrifice of this symbol, the tension could be relieved. The members of the Society sought Gandhiji's views on this thesis.

provincial conditions and not in an amateurish manner. The feeling against cow-killing was strongest in Bihar and the United Provinces. It is a problem from the past, requiring a life's study of several workers. He wanted the members to take up this work on the lines suggested. He was not a specialist in the line and could not undertake such work himself. He kept an open mind and would give his attention to all suggestions of a practical nature.

He was at present in a state of "collapse" so far as the solution of Hindu-Muslim Unity was concerned. He left the thing to nature. He believed that one, two, three pitched battles would convince the masses of the futility of such fights which were being engineered by the local and quarrelsome sections of both the communities. He had no power over these men. He believed that Hindu-Muslim Unity was coming fast like swaraj and that India was passing through a crisis.

The Hindu, 29-8-1925

63. NOTES

"SANATANA" HINDU

I have a correspondent who always brings me to book for the slightest negligence on my part. He is evidently a regular student of *Young India*, but no blind admirer. Here is a candid but friendly critic, and, if he sees something good in my writings, he detects also errors. One of his letters drawing attention to a possible inconsistency in my writings has long remained in my file. One portion of it deals with the definition of '*sanatana* Hindu'. Here is the letter:

> You have often declared yourself a *sanatana* Hindu, defining one as a believer in the Vedas, *Smritis* etc., and laid emphasis on the institution of castes by birth as legitimately following from those 'scriptures'. Of course you limit the number of castes to the supposed pristine four. (I say 'supposed pristine' advisedly—for, even as early as the times of the production of Manu['s] and other *Smritis*, there had been already so many castes evolved out of and recognized over and above the ideal four, although, be it noted, interdining and intermarriage amongst them all had not yet come to be interdicted.) Now the fourth or, last in order of the 'fundamental' castes, is the Sudra, which is debarred by those very 'scriptures' a belief in which you regard as the *sine qua non* of a *sanatana* Hindu, as well as by their 'twice-born' professors, from studying or reciting the Divine Vedas including the *Gayatri*, a recitation of which you mention as obligatory upon a *sanatana* Hindu (without distinction of caste). So the question arises: How can anyone (e.g., a Sudra) be

said to belong to a religion (viz., Hinduism as defined by you), if the mere reading, reciting or even the hearing of its scripture is tabooed to him, as though it were a sacrilege? How can you expect a man to be a swimmer without letting him step into water? Either one who is born a Sudra cannot be a *sanatana* Hindu in your sense, or else a *sanatana* Hindu must be something very different from what you define one to be. (I refer you to your old article on 'Hindusism' in 1921 and your address to the cow conference at Belgaum as printed in *Young India*, 29-1-'25). I for one, who am a Brahmin by birth, cannot glory in the name of 'Hindu' so long as an exemplar of *real sanatana* dharma like you permits the term to cover a bundle of contradictions like the one I have pointed out. Lastly, in view of your mention of *Gayatri*, may I humbly inquire whether you have in your 'twice-born' life never omitted to include the *Gayatri* in your daily prayers?"

I am not a literalist. Therefore, I try to understand the *spirit* of the various scriptures of the world. I apply the test of Truth and Ahimsa laid down by these very scriptures for interpretation. I reject what is inconsistent with that test, and I appropriate all that is consistent with it. The story of a Sudra having been punished by Ramachandra for daring to learn the Vedas I reject as an interpolation. And in any event, I worship Rama, the perfect being of my conception, not a historical person, facts about whose life may vary with the progress of new historical discoveries and researches. Tulsidas had nothing to do with the Rama of history. Judged by historical test, his *Ramayana* would be fit for the scrap heap. As a spiritual experience, his book is almost unrivalled, at least for me. And then, too, I do not swear by every word that is to be found in so many editions published as the *Ramayana* of Tulsidas. It is the spirit running through the book that holds me spell-bound. I cannot myself subscribe to the prohibition against Sudras learning the Vedas. Indeed, in my opinion, at the present moment, we are all predominantly Sudras so long as we are serfs. Knowledge cannot be the prerogative of any class or section. But I can conceive the impossibility of people assimilating higher or subtler truths, unless they have undergone preliminary training, even as those who have not made preliminary preparations are quite unfit to breathe the rarefied atmosphere in high altitudes, or those who have no preliminary training in simple mathematics are unfit to understand or assimilate higher geometry or algebra. Lastly, I believe in certain healthy conventions. There is a convention surrounding the recitation of the *Gayatri*. The convention is that it should be recited only at stated times and after ablutions performed in the prescribed manner. As I believe in

those conventions, and as I am not able always to conform to them, for years past I have followed the later Saints, and therefore have satisfied myself with the *Dwadasha Mantra* of the Bhagavata or the still simpler formula of Tulsidas and a few selections from the *Gita* and other works, and a few *bhajans* in Prakrit. These are my daily spiritual food—my *Gayatri*. They give me all the peace and solace I need from day to day.

WHERE IS IT?

The same correspondent writes:

> 'Where is it?' Where is Lohani? Echo still answers: Where? (Please see *Young India*, 30-4-'25, p. 150.) On two or three previous occasions, I remember, you published complaints from some Mussalmans alleging unholy hands to have been laid on their mosques by Hindus, but subsequently, on enquiry, you were forced to admit that the complaints were groundless; yet you failed or forgot then to specify the disproved cases and withdraw the published charges formally enough. Now, I fear the complaint about 'Lohani' is the latest of such inventions. If you refer to *Young India* 12-3-'25, p. 91, you will be reminded that the Lohani complaint was the only one which was picked out by you for publication out of a mass of other allegations that were made by your Muslim correspondent, but rejected by you as 'unsupported'. And now, what about that chosen one? *Does Lohani exist?* If so, is the allegation well-founded? If not, will you please wash your hands of the *patak*[1] by publishing a vicarious retraction at least as prominently as you did the original complaint, and that as early as possible?

I have removed the two or three concluding sentences which betray a style somewhat more energetic than the writer usually adopts. I must inform the readers that, in spite of very diligent inquiry from the original complainant and all those to whom he referred me, I have failed to identify the place in the map of India. As I have ceased to regard myself as an expert or an authority on the Hindu-Muslim question, I need not dwell upon the other points raised by the correspondent. It is with reluctance that I have found room at all for the paragraph. I felt that I was in honour bound to inform the readers of the result of my enquiry about Lohani.

THE CATTLE PROBLEM

Mr. Andrews has sent me the following cutting for disposal:

[1] Sin

'What other country on earth pays such a staggering price for the veneration of an animal?' asks the June issue of *The Round Table*, the quarterly review of the politics of the British Commonwealth. Figures are supplied by the article entitled 'The Disabilities of Rural Indian', showing that the annual economic loss 'is greater than the total revenue of British India',—an economic waste which is 'almost unbelievable'. The article referred to points out that 'the regard, even veneration, which some of the people have for all forms of animal life prevents them from restricting its multiplication, even when it comes into direct economic competition with men for the produce of the soil, or makes it impossible for him to develop it to its full capacity', and the following are the figures representing India's 'staggering price' for cow-veneration:

What surplus oxen cost India.	Rs.	1,15,20,00,000
What surplus cows cost India.	Rs.	61,20,00,000
Total	Rs.	1,76,40,00,000

This amount calculated at Rs. 15 to the £ equals £117,600,000. The annual land revenue for British India, we are told, amounts to 36 crores of rupees, so that the annual economic loss due to surplus cattle is over four times the land revenue.

There is no doubt that, like the growing poverty of India, the cattle problem is growing more and more serious. But the cattle problem of India is, for the vast majority of the population—the Hindus, the problem of cow-protection, taking the expression in its broad sense. There is, therefore, no doubt that we shall have to pay 'a staggering price' for ever. If we have no 'cow-veneration', we could make short work of all the surplus and dilapidated cattle, and save the seventeen hundred and sixty-four millions of rupees which the writer has dished out for us. Similarly, no doubt, we could free this land from poverty by killing out all the surplus population, all the diseased, all the weaklings, and a few thousands of us may then live on this vast surface of the earth, with a few pistols or some more quickly-working weapon of destruction for ridding ourselves of those men and animals, ferocious or otherwise, whom we may regard as a burden. But in India, like the poor and the diseased everywhere, we shall have to have our brethren the cattle also, and we must, therefore, solve the cattle problem, as the poverty problem, along our own, or as some might say, superstitious lines. I have endeavoured to show the way in my address to the Cow-Protection Conference. Within the limitations prescribed by religious sentiment, we must adopt the latest scientific methods. We must resort to scientific castration, we must find out an economical method of feeding our cattle, we must take

the maximum of service consistently with the welfare of the cattle, we must increase the milk supply from the existing cows and buffaloes, and we must make the best economical use of the hides of all dead cattle. If we succeed in doing these things, we shall have gone a long way towards solving the cattle problem.

There will still have to be a price paid for religious sentiment, but a religious sentiment is not worth the name if it is not worth paying for. The money that is daily being paid in the name of cow-protection blindly and in utter ignorance of scientific facts can be well utilized for the purposes above mentioned. It will make no direct return, but it will, under better conditions, prevent the wicked waste that is going on, and certainly save thousands of cattle from the butcher's knife to which they fall victim, not because of Mussalman or English cussedness, but because of Hindu stupidity. Today, because of our ignorance and slothfulness, millions of human beings and millions of cattle are dying of semi-starvation—a sad reflection upon religious India.

STEADY PROGRESS

The reader will remember my note on the progress made in eleven days in spinning at Satyashram, in Baherok. I have now another letter showing further progress, which I reproduce below:

> Perhaps you remember my last letter re the progress I made in spinning within 11 days. I am glad to inform you that we have been continuing the practice of spinning in competition almost every day. In the last four years, all our work would stop when the rains would set in, as the country at that time becomes a vast sheet of water. But since your last visit, we have been making steady progress in our work, in spite of the inclement weather of the rainy season.
>
> The total amount of yarn produced in the locality, which was only 1 or 2 seers at the time of your visit, has reached up to half a maund per month. The progress made by the boys of the national school is much more encouraging. The speed of a boy of 16 has come up to 730 yards of 15 counts per hour. The quality of the yarn is also appreciably improved.
>
> As regards the wheels, they are the same machines shown to you in the demonstration held in the Ashram compound. We have only changed the spindles. We hope to make further progress. May we have your sympathy and blessings?

If the authorities continue their faith in the spinning-wheel unabated, I have very little doubt that progress in spinning will also be continuous.

Congress Yarn

A correspondent from Conjeeveram writes:

> You have introduced a new factor into our politics, and that is khaddar. The common people have evinced very great interest in working it up. Up to the end of April, 1925 eighteen thousand yards of yarn have been sent as subscription. But the senders do not know what has become of the yarn. Neither the district nor the provincial Committees inform as to what is going on. Could we send subscriptions direct to you?

Another correspondent from Burra Bazar writes:

> I regularly send the yarn I spin to my District Congress Committee. But the answer to the question what is being done to it is that it is being eaten up by the rats. I would like you to enquire into this and provide a remedy.

I have picked up samples out of the many complaints received by me. I have no authority to receive subscriptions. I can receive donations of yarn as I do from every part of India. But subscriptions must go to authorized channels. It is, however, in order to remedy such defects that the proposal to form an All-India Spinners' Association has been made by me. Through it, if the Congress retains spinning as an optional part of the franchise and appoints the proposed body as its agency to receive spinning subscriptions, the defects mentioned can be obviated. Anyway, I have no doubt that some solution will be found by the forthcoming meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. Meanwhile, I commend the complaints to their respective Committees for attention.

Young India, 27-8-1925

64. AGE OF CONSENT

Mrs. Dorothy Jinarajadasa has issued a circular letter upon a Bill before the Legislative Assembly, whose object is to raise the Age of Consent at least to 14. She has favoured me with a copy of the circular letter which I reproduce below:

> I am writing to ask you if you can use your influence to obtain support for the Children's Protection Act that is coming up in the Legislative Assembly during the next session. I think very strongly that, if India is to be a great nation honoured and respected among the nations of the world, the blot of child motherhood must be removed from her.

> Last time the Bill came up, it received a very great deal of support in the country and in the Assembly, and I think that during the next session, there will not be much difficulty in passing it, if only we get a certain amount of expression of public opinion from the people. To my certain knowledge, there are quite a large number of meetings being held all over the country, especially by women, supporting this Bill, and I am sure that it is in line with the wishes of the majority of women that the age for the consummation of marriage for little girls should be raised to at least 14.
>
> I am sure that it would be a considerable help to the passage of the Bill if you could express your opinion strongly in support of it and also urge on men and women the importance of both supporting the Bill and living up to its principles in daily practice.

I must confess that I am ignorant of the Bill but I am strongly in favour of raising the Age of Consent not merely to 14, but even to 16. Whilst, therefore, I can say nothing about the text of the Bill, I should heartily endorse any movement whose object is to save innocent girls of tender age from man's lust. A so-called marriage rite ought no longer to confer legality upon an immoral and inhuman act which consummation even at the age of 14, in my humble opinion, undoubtedly is. Sanskrit texts of doubtful authority cannot be invoked[1] to sanctify a practice which is in itself immoral. I have witnessed the ruin of the health of many a child-mother, and when, to the horrors of an early marriage is added enforced early widowhood, human tragedy becomes complete. Any sensible legislation in the direction of raising the Age of Consent will certainly have my approval. But I am painfully conscious of the fact that even the existing legislation has proved abortive for want of public opinion to support it. The task before the reformer in this, as in many other directions, is most difficult. Constant and continuous agitation is necessary if any real impression is to be made on the Hindu public. I wish every success to those who are engaged in the noble task of rescuing Indian girls from premature old age and early death, and Hinduism from being responsible for bringing into being rickety weaklings.

Young India, 27-8-1925

[1] The Souree has "involved."

65. *SWARAJ OR DEATH*

The following[1] is printed not for its intrinsic worth but for the earnestness of the writer whom I know, and for the reason that many people hold similar views:

There is some truth in the correspondent's reasoning. But he is wholly wrong in imputing all evil to the Government. After all, is there not a great deal of truth in the saying that a people get the Government they deserve? If we had not been a people easily duped and as easily subdued, we would not have succumbed to the blandishments or the force of the East India Company and given up hand-spinning or khaddar. If the Hindus and Mussalmans had been living like brothers, the British satraps could not have divided us. And it is libellous to blame the Government for the existence of untouchability. Probably, if the Government had no fear of a revolt of orthodoxy, they would have made short work of untouchability long ago. I do not know a single case in which the Government have obstructed that reform. The correspondent is wrong in imputing blame to the British Government for the Vaikom business. It is solely due to the timidity of the indigenous Government. I am no lover of the existing system of Government. But I shall fail to destroy it if, in my rage, I lose the faculty for discrimination. 'Give the devil his due' is a sound proverb worth bearing in mind.

But I fully suspect that, when khaddar becomes powerful enough to oust foreign cloth, the Government will probably endeavour to kill it. I refuse to believe that it is or need be a rebel's dress. What is true is that there is a subtle propaganda against khaddar in Government circles. I am told that the wearing of khaddar places the wearer under observation. He cannot get the facilities he would otherwise get in Government circles. But there is nothing to prevent the general body of people from adopting khaddar. Surely swaraj will not drop from the clouds. It will be the fruit of patience, perseverance, ceaseless toil, courage and an intelligent appreciation of the environment. Even the 'divine agency' of which the correspondent writes will be available to prayerful toil, not laziness of mind or body. Prayer without labour is like faith without works—a Dead Sea apple. Whilst, therefore,

[1] For the text of this letter, *vide* Appendix I.

we may not have complete exclusion of foreign cloth, we might at least make a 'decent show' of khaddar before swaraj is won. What is, there, for instance, to prevent Congressmen from wearing khaddar on all occasions or from spinning? Or are they to be expected to wear khaddar and spin after swaraj is established? Are we angels merely waiting for the establishment of national Government to flap our wings? We may not have an ideal communal unity before swaraj. But what is there to prevent a workable unity? Is it not rather a fact that we distrust one another too much really to desire swaraj?

The correspondent's mistake lies in his misconception of the function of Government. He evidently thinks that an ideal Government is that which orders everything for us so that we need not even think for ourselves. Whereas, in truth, a Government that is ideal governs the least. It is no self-government that leaves nothing for the people to do. That is pupilage—our present state. My correspondent is evidently unable as yet to rise superior to that. But, if we are to attain swaraj, a large number of us must outgrow enforced nonage and feel our adolescence. We must govern ourselves at least where there is no deadly opposition from armed authority. The triple programme is the test of our capacity for self-government. If we impute all our weaknesses to the present Government, we shall never shed them.

The correspondent reminds me of a statement made by me at Belgaum that, probably, at the end of the year, if there is not much headway made, I would find a way whereby we could make our final choice and say 'Death or Swaraj'. He has evidently in mind some strange upheaval in which all distinction between violence and non-violence will be abolished. Such confusion will most assuredly lead to self-indulgence [which] is not self-rule. Self-indulgence is anarchy, and though anarchy is every time better than slavery or suppression of self, it is a state which I would not only have no hand in consciously bringing into being, but which I am by nature unfitted to bring about. Any method of 'Death or Swaraj' that I may suggest will always avoid confusion and anarchy. My swaraj will be, therefore, not a result of murder of others, but a voluntary act of continuous self-sacrifice. My swaraj will not be a bloody usurpation of rights but the acquisition of power. It will be a beautiful and natural fruit of duty well and truly performed. It will, therefore, provide amplest excitement of the Chaitanya type, not of the Nero type. I have no formula at the present moment, but with my correspondent I share the belief that it will be a divine guidance. I am awaiting the sign. It can come,

often does come, when the horizon is the blackest. But I know that it will be preceded by the rise of a class of young men and women who will find full excitement in work, work and nothing but work for the nation.

Young India, 27-8-1925

66. *KHADDAR WORKERS' CENSUS*

The following figures will speak for themselves. I am glad almost all the important centres have expedited their reports.

M. K. G.

Centre	No. full time workers	Graduates	Paid or Hon.	Maximum	Minimum	Average	Total Remuneration
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Tamil Nad Khadi Board	22	1	Paid	80	15	32-4-4	710
2. All India Khadi Board	24	8	2H+22P	150	10	64-8-0	1,504
3. Khadi Pratishthan Bengal	88	13	4H+84P	100	10	26	2,345
4. Gujarat Khadi Mandal	32	5	Paid	100	15	43-12	1,402
5. Punjab Khadi Board	15	1	Paid	150	20	50	750
6. C. P. (Hindi) Khadi Board	6	—	Paid	40	10	18	107

Young India, 27-8-1925

67. *A COMMON SCRIPT*

If we are to make good our claim as one nation, we must have several things in common. We have a common culture running through a variety of creeds and sub-creeds. We have common disabilities. I am endeavouring to show that a common material for our dress is not only desirable but necessary. We need also a common language not in supersession of the vernaculars, but in addition to them. It is generally agreed that that medium should be Hindustani—a resultant of Hindi and Urdu, neither highly Sanskri-

tized, nor highly Persianized or Arabianized. The greatest obstacle in the way are the numerous scripts we have for the vernaculars. If it is possible to adopt a common script, we should remove a great hindrance in the way of realizing the dream which, at present, is of having a common language.

A variety of scripts is an obstacle in more ways than one. It constitutes an effectual barrier against the acquisition of knowledge. The Aryan languages have so much in common that, if a great deal of time had not to be wasted in mastering the different scripts, we should all know several languages without much difficulty; for instance, most people who have a little knowledge of Sanskrit would have no difficulty in understanding the matchless creation of Rabindranath Tagore, if it was all printed in Devanagari script. But the Bengali script is a notice to the non-Bengalis—"hands off". Conversely, if the Bengalis knew the Devanagari script, they would at once be able to enjoy the marvellous beauty and spirituality of Tulsidas and a host of other Hindustani writers. When I returned to India in 1915,[1] I had a communication from a society whose headquarters were, I believe, in Calcutta, and whose object was to advocate a common script for all India. I do not know the activities of that society, but its object is worthy, and a great deal of substantial work can be done by a few earnest workers in this direction. There are obvious limitations. A common script for all India is a distant ideal. A common script for all those who speak the Indo-Sanskrit languages, including the Southern stock, is a practical ideal, if we can but shed our provincialisms. There is little virtue, for instance, in a Gujarati clinging to the Gujarati script. A provincial patriotism is good where it feeds the larger stream of all-India patriotism, as the latter is good to the extent that it serves the still larger end of the universe. But a provincial patriotism that says "India is nothing, Gujarat is all", is wickedness. I have selected Gujarat because it is the half-way house, and because I am myself a Gujarati. In Gujarat, somewhat fortunately, those who settled the principles of primary education decided to make Devanagari script compulsory. Every Gujarati boy or girl who has passed through a school, therefore, knows both the Gujarati and the Devanagri scripts. If the committee had decided upon purely Devanagari script, it would have been better still. No doubt, the research scholars would still have learnt the Gujarati script for deciphering old manuscripts, but the Gujarati boy's energy would have been spared for more useful labour, if he had to learn only

[1] The source has "1905", obviously a misprint.

one instead of two scripts. The committee that settled the education scheme for Maharashtra, was more enlightened, and it simply required the Devanagari script. The result is that a Mahratta reads, so far as mere reading is concerned, Tulsidas with as much facility as he reads Tukaram, and Gujaratis and Hindustanis read Tukaram with equal facility. The committee in Bengal, on the other hand, ruled otherwise, with the result we all know and many of us deplore. The treasures of the richest Indian vernacular have been rendered most difficult of access as if by design. That Devanagari should be the common script, I suppose, does not need any demonstration—the deciding factor being that it is the script known to the largest part of India.

These reflections arise, because, I was called upon to solve, during my visit to Cuttack, a practical question. There is a tribe wedged between the Hindi speaking people in Bihar and Uriya speaking people of Orissa. What was to be done for the education of its children? Were they to be taught through Uriya or through Hindi? Or were they to be taught through their own dialect and, if they were, was the script to be Devanagari or a new invention? The first thought of the Utkal friends was to absorb the tribe amongst the Uriyas. The Biharis would think of absorbing them in Bihar, and if the elders of the tribe were consulted, they would most probably and naturally say that their dialect was just as good as the Uriya or the Bihari, and that it should be reduced to writing. And for them it would be a toss whether the script to be adopted should be Devanagari or Uriya, if not even a newly invented script, as has happened in modern times in at least two instances I know. Endeavouring to think in terms of all India, I suggested to my friends that, whilst it was proper for them to strengthen the Uriya language among the Uriya speaking people, the children of this tribe should be taught Hindi and, naturally, the script should be Devanagari. A spirit that is so exclusive and narrow as to want every form of speech to be perpetuated and developed is anti-national and anti-universal. All undeveloped and unwritten dialects should, in my humble opinion, be sacrificed and merged in the great Hindustani stream. It would be a sacrifice only to be nobler, not a suicide. If we are to have a common language for cultured India, we must arrest the growth of any process of disintegration or multiplication of languages and scripts. We must promote a common language. The beginning must naturally be made with the script, and until the Hindu-Muslim question is solved, confined perhaps to Hindu India. If I could have my way, I would make the learning of Devanagari script and Urdu script, in

addition to the established provincial script compulsory in all the provinces and I would print in Devanagari chief books in the different vernaculars with a literal translation in Hindustani. Unfortunately, not many Congressmen have taken the trouble of learning the Devanagari script, and fewer still the Urdu script.

Young India, 27-8-1925

68. *HOOKWORM AND CHARKHA*

In the letter enclosing the cutting about cattle, dealt with elsewhere in this issue, Mr. Andrews writes:

> I have just had with me here Dr. Tendrich of the Rockefeller International Health Board who has been plodding away in Madras. He tells me that on examination 92 to 85 p.c. of the peasantry have hookworm, and other infections from night-soil, like typhoid and dysentery, which are rife owing to evacuations getting everywhere mixed up with the water supply. He says that they were just in the same condition as the Negroes in the Southern States twenty years ago. The consequence also was the same,—no vitality, a wretched life of weakness. Now, in the very same States today there is prosperity and vitality, because hookworm, typhoid, etc., have been conquered by the night-soil being got under control. He said to me that, if a change were made in the people's habits in this direction by the very simple method of a village drainage, which would be filled in every six months, and then every six months afterwards dug out and used as a perfectly safe fertilizer, as they do mostly in China, Japan and the States, the economic gain is so great as to be quite incalculable. My point is that the charkha has opened the village problem, but it has not solved it. And if you say that it alone will solve it, by concentrating on it alone, that is too narrow. The cattle problem and the sanitation problem are equally vital.

In this paragraph Mr. Andrews has raised the question of sanitation. I am not blind to the necessity of sanitation. I became a sanitary reformer long before I discovered the charkha. I was myself carrying on at the farm in Phœnix, Natal, experiments in burying night-soil and converting it into rich manure. We had there no scavenger; we were our own scavengers, and, as Mr. Andrews himself knows, one could walk about the settlement in Phœnix bare-footed without the danger of treading upon any dirt. The same treatment of night-soil is being continued at the Satyagraha Ashram on the banks of the Sabarmati. But I do not carry on any propaganda about it for the simple reason that it cannot

solve the problem of the daily-growing poverty immediately and directly. Moreover, in dealing with this question of insanitation, one has to fight against old prejudices and old habits. It is a matter of sustained education and one that cannot be dealt with without State aid. I regret to have to confess that ingrained bad habits handed down from generation to generation do not yield to persuasion. Legislation seems to me to be the only effective remedy.

But the same objection does not apply to the charkha. On the contrary, it is to be the precursor of every reform, and if I can only concentrate the attention of the nation upon the charkha, it will automatically solve all the other problems and pave the way for legislation where legislation is required. The charkha is calculated to make an immediate return, be it ever so small, to the individual. It presents the least difficulty in its working. There is no rooted prejudice against it. For the simple folk at least it requires no elaborate reasoning. It needs the smallest capital. It is the only constructive effort that is possible on a national scale. It is fraught with tremendous political consequences if it becomes successful, and seeing that it cannot succeed without co-operation it makes for a mighty co-operative effort. Hence the claim that concentration on charkha alone leads to swaraj, and if this is too strong a proposition, let it be put in another way—'Without the charkha and all it implies there is no swaraj, and therefore a wise economist will concentrate his attention upon the charkha alone, knowing that the rest will follow.'

Let me diagnose the disease a little deeper. It is not the drain that matters so much as poverty, and it is not even poverty that matters so much as idleness which was at first enforced, and has now become a habit that matters. The drain may be stopped and poverty is merely a symptom, but idleness is the great cause, the root of all evil, and if that root can be destroyed, most of the evils, can be remedied without further effort. A nation that is starving has little hope or initiative left in it. It becomes indifferent to filth and disease. It says of all reforms 'to what good?' That winter of despair can only be turned into the 'sunshine of hope' for the millions only through the life-giving wheel, the charkha.

Young India, 27-8-1925

69. *STATEMENT REGARDING A.I.C.C. MEETING*

[*August 27, 1925*]

Some friends have been to me telling me that the date 22nd September for the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee is an inconvenient one for the Bengalis in view of the forthcoming Puja holidays. The date has been fixed in consultation with Pandit Motilal Nehru who has chosen it after consultation with the members of the Assembly. The original date fixed has been anticipated for the convenience of these members so that they might not have a double journey. Had the 1st of October been retained, it would not have been possible to fix the venue at Patna. Even as it is, a telegram has been received from Sind protesting against the venue being fixed at Patna. I appreciate the difficulty of the Sindhi friends. But Patna has been chosen after much consultation and for the convenience of the majority of the members. The real Puja holiday commences on the 24th and I have promised the Bengal friends that, even though there may have to be a late night sitting, I shall finish the deliberations of the All-India Congress Committee on the 22nd so as to free the members to leave for Calcutta the night of 22nd. If any routine matters requiring the attention of the All-India Congress Committee remain over, and on which Bengali friends might not have any fixed views, subject to their consent, the proceedings will be prolonged beyond the 22nd. But the main purpose for which the meeting is being convened will be finished on the 22nd. I hope to be in Patna on the 20th. 21st is my day of silence, and I shall be free to discuss with friends who might arrive on the 20th any question that they may wish to discuss in regard to the proposed change in the constitution. Needless to say that no change in the constitution will be adopted unless there is an absolute unanimity. I hope all the members of the A.I.C.C. will attend the forthcoming meeting.

If all goes well, it is my desire also to inaugurate the All-India Spinners' Association and to discuss matters relating to the spinning-wheel and khaddar. I therefore, invite all khadi workers who may wish to help at the framing of the constitution of this organization to attend.

M. K. GANDHI

Forward, 30-8-1925

70. SPEECH AT MECCANO CLUB, CALCUTTA[1]

August 28, 1925

You have very adroitly got rid of the obligation of bestowing some little praise upon the speaker of the evening. I wish I could do likewise and avoid anything to speak at all. I had hoped that a little bit of praise from you would give me some encouragement, but that was not to be my lot. But I am convinced from the manner in which you have been conducting these proceedings and in which you have garlanded this little girl[2] that you at least are not guilty of any race hatred.

But in India, at the present moment, the young generation is undoubtedly face to face with this very problem. Is it possible to love one's country and not to hate those who rule over one's country, whose domination we do not want, whose domination we dislike from the bottom of our hearts? The answer has been in the hearts of many young men that it is impossible to love one's country and not to hate those who rule over one's country. Some of them expressed their opinion in broad daylight, a few of them translate that opinion into action. Many, however, harbour this opinion in secret and feed upon that opinion.

I have been a student of this question, not since my return to India in 1915, but ever since I entered into public life and public service. That was in 1894. But I have come deliberately to the conclusion that love of one's country, namely nationalism, is perfectly consistent with the love of those whose rule, whose domination, whose methods we do not like. I was face to face with that problem in my dealings with the South African Government or, more accurately speaking, the then Natal Government; later on with the Transvaal Government and later still with the Union Government. Most of you are aware of the disabilities—the glaring disabilities—under which our countrymen labour in that subcontinent—South Africa. It is enough; those disabilities are really enough to make one hate one's fellow beings, if one did not preserve one's sanity. You find there injustice rampant for no cause

[1] The meeting to which admission was by tickets, was held at the Overtoun Hall. The proceeds were sent to the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Rev. T.E.T. Shore presided.

[2] Here Gandhiji pointed to a five-year-old girl.

save that you do not have the same colour of skin. There shall be no equality between the white and the coloured races—so runs the constitution of the Union Government. It was at one time an article of the Transvaal Government constitution, but the constitution has today been adopted by the Union Government. When you come to India you find, though not the same thing, much the same thing and very often one finds it most difficult to reconcile the two things, love of one's country and love also of one whom you may consider to be the tiger. It is beside the point whether you are just and correct in your estimate or whether you are incorrect, but the impression left upon your mind is that you are labouring under the grossest form of tyranny, grossest form of injustice. How shall you then love the tiger?

Let me put it in another way—not necessarily that you should love the tiger, but love is an active force and the subject of this evening is—Is it necessary to hate the tiger? Is hatred essential for nationalism? You may not love, but must you also hate? The answer, as I have said before, in the minds of many people is undoubtedly that you must hate. Some, I know, consider it their duty to hate the tiger and they cite instances from modern constitutions, they cite the late disastrous War in Europe, they cite wars of which they have learnt in history; they cite also the law, and they say society hangs on the gallows those who are guilty of murder. Is not that a sign of hatred? There certainly is no love. Would not one love one's father, would not one love one's dearest ones, even if they might err? [Would one wish them] to be hanged on the gallows? One would pray for their reformation but not for their punishment, and yet, it is said, perhaps with a great deal of justification, that society will break into pieces if under the law of sanction punishment was withdrawn, abolished or suspended. With those illustrations before them, the young men rush to the conclusion that those who consider that hatred is not essential for nationalism are in the wrong. I do not blame them. They have to be pitied; they command my sympathy, but I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that they are labouring under the grossest delusion; and so long as they retain that attitude, so long as a large body of men and women retain that attitude the progress of this country, the progress of the world is retarded. It does not matter to me that all those illustrations that I have placed before you can be cited in order to justify their conduct.

The world is weary of it. We see the fatigue overcoming the Western nations. We see that this song of hate has not bene-

fited humanity. Let it be the privilege of India to turn a new leaf and set a lesson to the world. (Cries of 'hear, hear'.) Is it necessary that three hundred millions of people should hate one hundred thousand Englishmen? That is the concrete term to which I can reduce this evening's subject. In my humble opinion it is derogatory to the dignity of mankind, it is derogatory to the dignity of India to entertain for one single moment hatred towards Englishmen. That does not mean that you are to be blind to the excesses that English rulers have been found to commit in India. I have drawn this particular distinction between the evil and the evil-doer. Hate the evil but not the evil-doer. We ourselves, every one of us, are full of evil. And we want the world to be patient with us, to be forgiving, to be gentle with us. I would like the same thing to be meted out to the Englishmen. Heaven knows no one in India perhaps can claim better than myself to have spoken as fiercely and as fearlessly of the many misdeeds of English rulers and the corrupt nature of the system under which we are governed. My freedom from hatred—I would even go so far as to claim for myself individually—my love of those who consider themselves to be my enemies, does not make me blind to their faults. That is no love which is extended simply because of the possession of some virtues fancied or real in the beloved. If I am true to myself, if I am true to mankind, if I am true to humanity, I must understand all the faults that human flesh is heir to. I must understand the weaknesses of my opponents, the vices of my opponents and, yet, in spite of these vices, not hate but even love them. It is by itself a force. Brute force has been handed down to us from generation to generation. We have used it and we have found what it has done for Europe and what it has done for the world. The glamour of European civilization does not dazzle us. Scratch beneath the surface and you will find there very little to choose.

Do not for one moment consider that I condemn all that is Western. For the time being I am dealing with the predominant character of modern civilization, do not call it Western civilization, and the predominant character of modern civilization is the exploitation of the weaker races of the earth. The predominant character of modern civilization is to dethrone God and enthrone Materialism. I have not hesitated to use the word "Satan". I have not hesitated to call this system of Government under which we are labouring "Satanic". And I withdraw not one word from it. But, however, I shall not deal with it this evening. If I begin to devise means of punishing the evil-doer, my business is to love them and by patient and gentle handling to convert them.

Non-co-operation or satyagraha, therefore, is not a hymn of hate. I know that many who call themselves satyagrahis or non-co-operators do not deserve to bear that name. They have done a violence to their own creed. They were not real representatives of this principle. Real non-co-operation is non-co-operation with evil and not with the evil-doer. Sometimes it is difficult, I know, to distinguish between evil and evil-doer. But how are you to non-co-operate with the evil and not with the evil-doer? I do not want to go into the whole of the intricate doctrine. I can simply comment on what is going on during these 5 or 6 years. If we understand the secret of this doctrine and the beautiful consistency between hating evil and not hating evil-doers, I have said that all that we need today is to extend the law that we apply in our domestic relations to the political field, and, therefore, to the relations between the rulers and the ruled and you will find the true solution. What does a father do to a son who is inclined to do evil and become corrupted? He does not punish him nor does he encourage him, but tries to correct him.

Your non-co-operation is intended not to encourage evil. That is the meaning. One of the greatest writers has said that if the world ceases to encourage evil, evil will die of inanition. If we simply find out for ourselves to what extent we are responsible for the evil that exists in society today, we will soon see that evil will soon be gone from society. But we tolerate it under a false sense of love. I am not talking of the blind love that dotes on an erring son and pats him on the back while he errs, nor am I speaking of the son who, under a false sense of loyalty to his father, tolerates evil in his father. I am not talking of that. I am talking of the love that discriminates, that is intelligent, that is not blind to a single fault. That is the love of reform, and the moment we have seized the secret, that very moment the evil goes out of sight.

I talk of the relations between the two races. Think of the many evils from which we are suffering today in Hindu society. Let alone Mussalmans, let alone Christians, Parsis and others. The majority of us are Hindus. How should we deal with the evil that is rampant in Hinduism? Shall we hate those who consider untouchability part and parcel of Hindu religion and quote scriptures in favour of untouchability or shall we remove untouchability by our persistent conduct? The secret, then, is suffering, but not to subject the evil-doers to suffering, but to take the suffering upon our own shoulders. If we reform Hinduism of the many abuses that have crept into it, we shall only do so by taking

the instance of Vaikom. It comes to me naturally because it is through praise that you see the finished example. I know every one of the brave young men. I think I know every one of them who are working in Vaikom under terrible difficulties. They have undergone suffering which I cannot possibly describe here in the few moments, but I dare give this testimony to you that these young men have not erred by a hair's breadth. I mean the young men of Vaikom. I don't say individuals have not erred, but they have kept their record absolutely clean. The result is that they have not yet got rid of the whole of abuses, but I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind that in Travancore today untouchability has lost its foothold, it is fast dying simply because of the determination of a handful of youth who plunged themselves down into the midst of Vaikom and invited suffering on their own shoulders. That is really the secret. In my humble opinion hatred is not essential for nationalism. Race hatred will kill the real national spirit. Let us understand what nationalism is. We want freedom for our country. We do not want sufferings for other countries: we do not want the exploitation of other countries; we do not want the degradation of other countries. For my part I don't want the freedom of India if it means the disappearance of Englishmen, if it means the extinction of Englishmen. I want the freedom of my country so that other countries may learn something from this free country of mine. I want freedom of my country so that the resources of my country might be utilized for the benefit of mankind just as the cult of patriotism teaches us today that the individual has to die for the family, the family has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the Province and the Provinces for the whole nation, and when we indulge in provincialism I as a Gujarati say, Gujarat first, Bengal and the rest of Provinces next. There is no nationalism in it. On the contrary if I live in Gujarat and prepare Gujarat, I should prepare Gujarat so that the vast resources of Gujarat might be placed at the disposal of Bengal, nay, of the whole of India, that Gujarat may die for the whole of India. My love, therefore, of nationalism, or my idea of nationalism is that my country may become free—free that if need be the whole of the country may die—so that the human race may live. There is no room here for race hatred. Let that be our nationalism.[1]

[1] What follows is extracted from Mahadev Desai's account in *Young India*, 10-9-1925.

A question from Mr. Chapman, the Librarian of the Imperial Library, at the conclusion of the speech, drew a telling reply from Gandhiji. 'Was not the insistence on political freedom and political equality on the part of Indians conducive to race hatred, when Indians themselves were not capable of ruling themselves' was in effect Mr. Chapman's question.

If you have drawn the deduction from what I said that we should tolerate your rule so long as we are not capable of managing our affairs, you are mistaken. We can develop that capacity only by resistance to the system. And may I say that the questioner unconsciously betrayed his own race prejudice when he referred to Indians as incapable of ruling themselves. Underlying that prejudice is the idea of superiority and the conceit that the Englishmen are born to manage the affairs of the world. That is an idea to fight which my whole life has been dedicated. Unless the Englishmen are dislodged from that position there is no peace in India, nor any peace for the weaker races of the earth. It is the absolute right of India to misgovern herself. My heart rebels against any foreigner imposing on my country the peace which is here called 'Pax Britannica'.

Forward, 29-8-1925

71. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, CALCUTTA[1]

August 29, 1925

In thanking the students for the purse presented to him, Mahatma Gandhi said they should remember that, in revering the memory of Deshbandhu, they were revering their country and they pledged themselves to do something, be it ever so little—to the best of their ability—for their country. But, as he had said repeatedly, these subscriptions he regarded only as an earnest of what the subscribers were going to do for their country.

Speaking of organization, Mahatmaji said that, first of all, they should understand what was meant by organization. But what was the meaning of organization? Organization meant that the people should have a united purpose, a united will. Immediately they had got these two conditions fulfilled, they had brought into being a little organization. Although, they, the Indians, seemed to have a common aspiration, they had not yet discovered that, for common aspirations, common methods were also necessary. They had not yet

[1] The Ashutosh College Students' Parliament, under whose auspices the meeting was held at Russa Theatre Hall, presented Gandhiji with a purse of Rs. 1,001 for the All-Bengal Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Prof. M. C. Bhattacharya presided.

received the faculty for application in connection with these common aspirations. These aspirations of theirs still more or less remained only as ideals and a few of them, who were endeavouring to translate those ideals into action, were too few to bring into being organizations that were necessary in order to permeate the masses of India. Another requirement for efficient organization was a leader, or more than a leader, soldiers. They might have a towering personality like Deshbandhu and people in their adoration and admiration might follow such a man for the time being irresistibly attracted to him. But that did not bring into being an organization. The test of an organization was that they should work as soldiers, not because they were irresistibly drawn to a personality but because they were irresistibly drawn to the principle. Therefore, the requirements of an organization were common will, common purpose, a leader, disciplined soldiers.

How could students then learn the spirit of organization? That was to say, in concrete terms, what was to be their own purpose, what was to be their common will in connection with India in terms of the nation? Naturally, the first answer was that students should import national consideration even in their studies. While students they should not only think for themselves, what they should do after they were discharged from colleges, but they should also learn how they would utilize the knowledge they were gaining. They should see that there was no contradiction or inconsistency between obligations to the family and obligations to the nation. Taking his audience back to 1908, Mahatmaji said that he had discovered one thing common and that was the spinning-wheel. He had discovered, and he challenged anybody to disprove the discovery, that this nation was dying of sloth and idleness. Poverty, hunger, drain from India—certainly all these things could be stopped in a moment if they would only shed their idleness and sloth. If they would go to the villages, they would see for themselves that the root cause of the deep, distressing poverty of India was slothfulness. Nay he would go so far as to say that idleness was the cause of their foreign domination. For it was his settled conviction that a nation which was not a nation of idlers, a nation which utilized all its time for its existence, defied the whole might of the universe. India should do likewise. Every villager should consider it his duty to work every spare moment at his disposal for the sake of the motherland.

Then, what was the work that every one of them could do, retaining his own individual work? The answer was simple, and that was the charkha. Therefore, students should go to the villages, and try to impress upon the villagers the potency of the charkha and that they would succeed in doing only when they had shed their slothfulness and idleness and gone there not as patrons, but as servants.

Speaking about swadeshism, Mahatmaji said that swadeshism is a conservative spirit—not conservative or radical—but conservative in its original root meaning, i.e., something that conserved. The spirit of swadeshi would

enable and teach them to conserve all that was best. There was a process of rejection also, but not summary rejection nor blind adoration of all that was ancient, simply because it was ancient. They must use the God-gifted reason, discrimination. Swadeshism was a discriminating, conservative spirit which would retain all that was best in national life, in ancient tradition and at the same time absorb by assimilation—not by base imitation—all that was best in the modern world, all that was best in the West, so that from good they might grow to better and from better to still better. But there was some fundamental principle in their religion which could not be improved upon. What possible improvement could they make on the statement "God is Truth and Love"? But there were certain usages and customs which had been handed down to them. All these customs must vary according to the varying circumstances and here they must reject them if they conflicted with reason, with their moral sense of mankind.

But he knew that swadeshism had become cheap today. Anything imported from Germany, Japan became a swadeshi article. To him that was a parody of swadeshism.

My swadeshi is khaddar, because I have taken my stand on one thing, and restricted my swadeshism. Manufactured goods we must not use—goods from outside which we can usefully manufacture in our own country. That is not antagonistic to anything, but it is the law of charity beginning at home it is the law of charity which teaches us that, if we do not serve our family, our neighbour, we will not be able to serve our distant neighbour. Remember one yard of calico puts into the pockets of the labourers one pie. One yard of khaddar, khaddar bought from the villagers, puts into the hands of the famishing villagers at least four annas. Make your choice—one pie or four annas and decide for yourselves.

Forward, 30-8-1925

72. SPEECH AT BENGAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE, CALCUTTA

August 29, 1925

On rising to speak, Mahatmaji was accorded a great ovation and he began by saying that, when the son[1] of late Babu Kalicharan Banerjee requested him to address the meeting of the Indian Christian community, he could not but comply with his request, because the request was made by the son of one whom he revered most and whom he had the good fortune to meet on an occasion of seeking his advice at a critical time.

Mahatmaji continued to say that he had no new message to deliver to them. Whatever he had got to say to his Christian brethren of Indian nationality he had said on many previous occasions and they had read it in newspapers. His first intimate relations with the Indian Christians began while he was in South Africa. There he made acquaintance with a large number of Indian Christians who used to share his joys and trials equally with him. Ever since that time his intimacy with them had been on the increase.

Mahatmaji next referred to the deplorable condition of the Indian Christians for their mixing Christianity with European modes and methods. He said that, for the first time, he detected this perverse mentality of the Indian Christians in South Africa and from that time he had been all along striving hard to combat this evil idea. He had very often tried to prove that there was a clear distinction between the modes and manners of Europeans and Indian Christians. On the previous evening, he showed that race hatred was not nationalization.[2] Similarly, he had shown that Christianity did not mean denationalization. He was quite sure that for them Christianity did not mean Europeanization. It had no geographical limit. Jesus lived every inch of him in Asia and certainly Christianity had no relation whatsoever with Europeanization.

Mahatmaji further observed that there seemed to exist a wide gulf between the Indian Christians and Indian Hindus and Mohammedans. No doubt the gulf was gettig narrower day by day. But it should be bridged over without any further delay. Everyone of a particular religion must love those who belonged to other religions. Referring to his experience in Travancore, Mahatmaji said that in that State there was a large number of highly educated and cultured Indian Christians. He was glad to find them try to do away with hatred and ill will of any sort for men of other religions. The sooner the number of such Christians increased, the better for India.

[1] J. K. Banerjee, who presided at the meeting.

[2] *Vide* "Speech at Meccano Club, Calcutta", 28-8-1925.

Mahatmaji continued that they had gone away far from their original religion. Therefore, they must be prepared to come back to their old brethren with loving hearts. They had gone within the fold of another religion simply to rise above, at least as they thought it to be, superstition and errors of their ancient forefathers. So, they must rise above any malice or despite for their brethren. Next he referred to internationalism and said that his strong belief was that, without being nationalist, none could lay claim to internationalism. Unless a man could serve his family, his village and his country he could not serve the world. Internationalism had got no malice, no ill will or contempt, but it had only peace and goodwill in it, and unless a man began to love heartily his neighbours, he could not cultivate the spirit of love for the outside world. He continued that Christianity to them must be a better expression of nationalism, so they should be prepared to die for the nation before they could claim to give up their life for the cause of the world. In his opinion, Christianity must not be repugnant to nationalism. It must mean a greater dedication of their lives to the country's cause and for that they must enter into the hearts of the masses. He had heard many Christians say that they had nothing to do with the masses of India. He thought no religion could say so, since all of them were imperfect in some sense or other. Mahatmaji requested the Indian Christians to dispel such ideas from their minds.

Referring to the poverty of India, Mahatmaji next said that certainly Christianity did not mean multiplication of wants—wants which poor India could ill afford to supply. Many might say that their outlook was not limited within a narrow sphere. He would ask them to examine their hearts and see whether their utterances were at one with their belief, and he was sure they wouldn't be able to reconcile their utterances with their beliefs.

Last of all, Mahatmaji appealed to them to put on khaddar at least, if they could not spin. For every yard of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar they bought, they paid in a way at least four annas to their suffering brethren in the villages who were dying of starvation practically for want of work. Mahatmaji concluded his speech by saying that in pursuance of the high tenets of their religion which was absolutely based on the spirit of service to mankind they should buy khaddar and thus save their millions of starving brethren who lived in the remote villages.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 30-8-1925

73. A GREAT DISEASE

India is a land of peasants. In a way the whole world belongs to peasants. In other countries, however, people do not live by farming alone. In some countries people earn their living by hunting. England lives by its industries. It imports much of the grain that it needs. For India, however, farming is the only means of subsistence. If the rains fail, the people have to starve. The farmers have to look up to the clouds in the monsoon.

However, as only a few persons can cultivate the land all the year round, crores of people are without any occupation for four to six months. Hence we have become idle. This has not always been our plight. Crores of people were kept employed when we made cloth ourselves. All these crores suffer from idleness today. Their eyes have lost lustre. They are without hope; their faces are devoid of enthusiasm. We are in such a sad plight where idleness has become second nature to us. This idleness of the peasants is shared by the middle class too. There can be no swaraj for an idle nation. Idleness leads to destruction. While moving amidst hundreds of thousands of people, I find that they do not get weary of chatting or just sitting doing nothing. If I don't look out, many people would sit around me and believe that they were doing something meritorious.

This idleness is a great disease with us, whose symptom is poverty. I believe that while the drain of money from this country is the cause of our poverty, it is not the cause. It is our idleness that is responsible both for our poverty and the drain of our resources. And, what else can an idle person become but a slave? Idlers have never become, and never will become, self-reliant.

How to get rid of this idleness? By taking up some sort of activity. Which is the activity that can be taken up by crores of human beings? In my opinion the spinning-wheel is the only activity of this kind. Anyone who can find a better activity for the people is free not to work on the spinning-wheel. I have been claiming from the very beginning that the spinning-wheel is the best possible means of making an idle person active; however, if anyone points out a more fruitful means which could be generally adopted, I will readily bow to him. I have come across many persons who are hard working themselves. But does this make the whole country industrious? There are ten or twenty

millionaires in India, there are twenty-five or fifty rulers; does that, however, make everyone a millionaire or a ruler? We can be called a single nation when those who are well-to-do partake of the misery of the country. Even a person like Shri Krishna had to work for the mass of people even though it was unnecessary so far as he himself was concerned. Moreover, it is not sufficient to be engaged in work that is directed to one's self-interest. Those who can be called public leaders or public servants will pursue for the good of others an activity which crores of persons pursue in mere self-interest. If they do not do this, even those who work for the sake of self-interest will give it up under a false glamour or illusion. In this case, we have to fashion workers out of idlers. We have also to teach them an activity which will bring about the good of the individual and society. The spinning-wheel alone can offer such an activity. It is for this very reason that I call the spinning-wheel a *Kamadhenu*[1]. Once the people realize the value of time, they will be able to understand everything else.

Mr. Andrews has posed two questions. We incur a loss of crores of rupees every year as cattle are not properly looked after. Moreover, as people do not put their excreta to good use, manure worth crores of rupees is wasted, and this also leads to the spread of diseases among people. If I can stress the importance of the activity of spinning, why do I not attempt readily to save crores of rupees by stressing the importance of this problem of cattle and this problem of filth? I have taken up the responsibility of cow-protection by way of protecting cattle. The problem of filth is a very difficult one which also owes its existence partly to our idleness. If people realize the importance of working hard the problem of cattle and that of filth would immediately be solved. If people do not take up the activity of spinning which is both easy and immediately rewarding how will they understand the problem posed by cattle and filth, which can be solved after very great efforts? Hence, from whichever angle you look you will see the very same thing. Idleness is the great disease of India and the spinning-wheel is the sole remedy for it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-8-1925

[1] Mythical cow yielding whatever is asked of her

74. *MY NOTES*

End of the Bengal Tour

By the end of August, my tour of Bengal will be over. I would have stayed about a month and a half longer than intended.[1] I had not known the Bengalis previously as I have come to know them this time. I have had the pleasure of knowing many types of Bengalis. However, right now I do not wish to describe my experiences. What I write now is meant for Gujaratis.

I shall be reaching Bombay in connection with the Dadabhai Centenary, on the 3rd. After celebrating this occasion on the 4th, I expect to reach the Ashram on the 5th. I shall have to leave the Ashram again on the 9th. I hope to complete some tasks during these four days. Among these, I hope to give an account of the work of the Kathiawar Political Conference.[2] The latter has given khadi a place of prime importance. Devchandbhai will give an account of the extent to which this task has been carried out. In my opinion, a fairly good proportion of what was expected has been accomplished. The workers have not been idle.

What now remains is the political work. To some extent, I had taken this burden upon my shoulders. I have not been oblivious of this task although I was not in Gujarat. This does not imply that any success has been achieved. I only wish to say here that I do not, in any way, regret the advice that I offered to Kathiawar.[3] My experience confirms its wisdom.

It is extremely difficult to solve the problem of mismanagement where it exists in the Indian States. But it is not impossible. That, however, depends on increasing the strength of the peasantry and educating the rulers. The strength of the former cannot be increased by any outward struggle but through their own training. Hence, constructive work is the basis for solving political problems. Opinions may differ on whether this means the spinning-wheel or some other activity. But the time is drawing near when there will be a general agreement that the true solution of political problems lies in the education of the people.

[1] Gandhiji was in Bengal from May 1, 1925 to September 1, 1925.

[2] On September 6, Gandhiji presided over the meeting of its managing committee held at Sabarmati Ashram.

[3] As president of the Kathiawar Political Conference, when its third session was held at Bhavnagar on January 8, 1925

vessel to clean themselves with. In the river near Trichinopoly one can see excreta with the naked eye! And, the same water is used for bathing and drinking! In Bengal hundreds of puddle-like tiny lakes are used for the purpose of bathing, washing and drinking—by cattle and human beings.

The complaint made by Mr. Andrews's friend, however, relates to something else. He says, "the farmers make dirty the soil by defecating and urinating at any place. When it rains there, the water is polluted by all this filth and, since lakhs of people walk bare-foot, they fall a prey to hookworm, dysentery, etc. Many people suffer and many die an untimely death. Fine manure can be made out of this filth. The people of China save crores of rupees by doing so. Why should not Indians do so and, at the same time, keep healthy? At one time the conditions in South America were the same as those obtaining in India. They have been changed in twenty years with great effort and the people are free from many diseases".

We, too, could save ourselves if we so desire. Next week, we shall discuss how to do so.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-8-1925

76. LETTER TO PROTAP CHANDRA GUHA ROY

[Before *September 1, 1925*]

I thought you had surrendered already. I was thinking of you early this morning and thought you had gone without my seeing you. I am glad you have come. Do keep well in the jail, go in for introspection. There is much work to be done if we are to get swaraj before long. We must achieve power, but that will not be without enlightened consecration. I know that consecration through the charkha is the best and the noblest because it is so selfless. You cannot spin the wheel and not think of the dumb millions. I know nothing better.

Forward, 1-9-1925

77. NOTES

THE LATE DR. BHANDARKAR

The death of Sir Ramakrishna Bhandarkar[1] removes from our midst a celebrated Sanskrit scholar and social reformer. Dr. Bhandarkar's services to Sanskrit learning will always be remembered. He made Sanskrit learning by English-speaking Indians easy, interesting and popular. The Sanskrit text-books written by him still retain their popularity. His researches won the recognition and admiration of Oriental scholars throughout the world. Dr. Bhandarkar was as ardent a social reformer as he was a ripe Sanskrit scholar. A grateful country will ever cherish the memory of the deceased scholar. I tender my respectful condolences to his family.

THE FORTHCOMING A.I.C.C.

I hope that every member of the A.I.C.C., unless he is prevented by unforeseen circumstances, will make it a point to attend the forthcoming meeting of the Committee and take part in its deliberations and register his vote. The chance sought to be made in the constitution can only be justified, if there is a unanimous and insistent demand for it. Unanimity and insistence can only be proved by every member attending even at considerable inconvenience and sacrifice if necessary. It will not do for members to assume anything as a foregone conclusion, and let those who attend do what they like. Absence from the meeting will be presumed to be a sign of want of sense of responsibility unless the absence is otherwise duly accounted for. Members should realize that I have not worried them throughout the year, and but for the emergency I would certainly not have worried them now. In my opinion, a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and the expense attendant upon it can only be warranted if a new policy has to be initiated or important resolutions of an educative character are required to be passed. The intention at first was to hold the meeting on the 1st of October in Bombay. But it was suggested that an earlier meeting will be more convenient for the members of the Committee, and that it could be more conve-

[1] 1837-1925; the Oriental Research Institute at Poona was named after him. Gandhiji first met him in 1896, when he presided over a meeting addressed by Gandhiji, *vide* Vol. II, p. 136.

niently held at Patna. There is hardly a place which is equally suitable for all. When Bombay was thought of, the Bengalis were perturbed. Patna having been appointed, there is a protest from far-off Sind. I wish it was possible for me to please all the members and all the provinces in justifying the choice of Patna. I can only say that it was selected because many considered that it was the most suitable place, and more especially, because Pandit Motilalji desired it after consultation with his colleagues in the Assembly. And I had no hesitation in fixing Patna when I knew that Panditji's health would be better conserved by selecting Patna as the venue. He is by no means yet strong or completely restored. Asthmatic spasms are only under check and are kept so by the greatest vigilance and care. I, therefore, hope that no member will absent himself because Patna is too far away for him.

All-India Spinners' Association

It is my intention, too, at the same meeting, if all goes well, to inaugurate the All-India Spinners' Association. I would like, therefore, all khaddar workers who are interested in its inauguration, and who have valuable suggestions to make, to attend at Patna whether they are members of the A.I.C.C. or not. I would like them to advise Babu Rajendra Prasad of their intention to attend and of the addresses where they would be staying. If they require Babu Rajendra Prasad to arrange for their food and lodging, they should give him due notice. I have requested Rajendra Babu to advertise the charges it would be necessary for intending visitors to pay if they want him to make the arrangements for them.

Why Not All Parties

The idea running through my mind is to lighten the burden of the forthcoming Congress, to adjust differences that there may be amongst Congressmen, and to explore avenues, if any, of common action by all parties so that the Congress may be free to discuss and initiate new policies and new programmes if any. It may be asked why I am not inviting leaders of other parties also to meet at Patna. I had given most anxious consideration to the matter, and I have come to the conclusion that such an invitation at this stage will bear no fruit. It will be time enough to take the next step when all the Congressmen know their own minds and become of one mind. The differences between the Congressmen and others are well known and well defined. It will be for the Congressmen first to consider how far it is possible for them to go, and

then to hold consultation with the leaders of the other parties. For the time being, I must content myself with giving the assurance to all concerned that I yield to no one in my desire to see all the parties united on a common platform. But I know that when the differences are fundamental, it is difficult, in spite of all the desire in the world, to construct a common platform. What is true of Chemistry is true of human beings. Incompatibles meet but to explode. What every Congressman aims at, and must aim at, is a real union or combination which would mean strength, not a patched-up makeshift which can only weaken the nation and, therefore, retard the national cause.

Khaddar in Bihar

A friend writes from Purulia:

> As you are expected to come to Purulia, all the people are buying khaddar just to wear it during your stay. Your visit has reminded some of these men of their promise to use khaddar, and some are buying it just to escape public criticism. Now, if a man uses foreign cloth as a rule, but only wears khaddar on certain occasions, he is a hypocrite. And if your visit increases the number of such men, what is the use? Hypocrites never help the self-government of any country. There was a time when I deemed it a pleasure to present khaddar garments on marriage ceremonies. But I found by experience that it was almost impossible to get pure khaddar locally. What is generally bought as such is made in Japan or in Indian mills, and what I have bought from Swaraj Ashram has warp made of mill yarn.

This letter raises two important points. One is whether there is any use in occasional use of khaddar. On the principle that something is better than nothing even an occasional use of khaddar is to be encouraged. We want to sell home-made, home-woven, and home-spun cloth. Any demand for such cloth is, therefore, welcome and those who make occasional use are likely to make even habitual use of khaddar. I would, therefore, encourage its use on every occasion. Nor can I endorse the remark that those who wear khaddar on particular occasions are necessarily hypocrites. If a man pretends to be what he is not, he is a hypocrite, not one who makes no such pretences. One who drinks secretly and makes his neighbour believe that he is a teetotaller is a hypocrite to be shunned. A man who makes no secret of his habit of drinking, but omits drinking in society, or out of regard for his friends, is not only not a hypocrite, but a sensible and considerate man, and there is every hope of his being weaned

from his habit. If, therefore, the people of Purulia, who are reported to be buying khaddar in view of my forthcoming visit, are doing so in order to induce the belief in me that they have never worn any other cloth, they are undoubtedly hypocrites. But I do not believe that they are buying khaddar with any such unholy design. It is no secret to me that a vast number of people have not yet given up the habit of using mill-made cloth, foreign or indigenous. But they do not mind using khaddar occasionally, and, since it has now become the Congress dress, people who attend Congress functions even occasionally consider it proper to wear khaddar. Whilst, therefore, I should like all those in Bihar who are buying khaddar to enable them to appear at Congress functions during my tour, to wear it habitually, I am unable to condemn its use for the occasion of my tour. It is some gain, be it ever so small, that the surplus khaddar stock in Bihar will be used up and so much money freed for manufacture of more khaddar.

The second point raised by the correspondent is serious. The only way to avoid fraudulent imitations is for purchasers to ensure the purity of their purchases. Congress organizations, or khaddar organizations can do a great deal to prevent, or, at any rate, to check the evil. The correspondent states khaddar stores should be run by the Congress in all principal centres. Some such thing has been attempted, but it is a matter of finance and organization. The All-India Spinners' Association is being conceived for the purpose of dealing with such evils. Meanwhile I would urge writers like my correspondent not to give up khaddar for want of facility. It is because the successful organizing of khaddar and the spinning-wheel means the evoking of all that is best in us that I often say that the adoption of the spinning-wheel will lead to swaraj.

Half-khaddar

The correspondent also deals with the evil of half-khaddar being manufactured and sold by Congress organizations. The evil is serious enough. A Congress organization, which is pledged to sell khaddar, can have nothing to do with half-khaddar. So long as Congressmen do not see the simple truth that manufacture of half-khaddar prevents the evolution of hand-spun yarn, spinning will be done indifferently. To subject hand-spun yarn to the test of the loom by using it for the warp is the surest and the quickest way of improving the quality of hand-spun yarn. It is a superstition to believe that by and by one would be able

to displace mill yarn from warp. The difficulty will have to be faced one day. It has already been faced by several Congress organizations. There is no difficulty about getting hand-spun yarn woven, if not in the district of its production, in some other district. I wish, therefore, that Congress organizations should cease to weave or deal in half-khaddar.

Cow-protection

Those who imposed on me the responsibility of conducting the All-India Cow-Protection Association and those who were responsible for its inauguration may rest assured that its affairs have not escaped my attention. Only, the more I study the subject, the more I realize the difficulty of the task. With the protection of the cow, in the sense in which I have used it, is bound up not merely the welfare of the cattle of all India and the good name of Hinduism, but, also to a very large extent, the economic welfare of the country. The conviction is also becoming more and more deep-rooted in me that the solution of the problem lies in the acceptance by Hindus in particular, and the Indians in general, of the methods adopted by the Association. In order to enable me to study, or to have studied, all the literature on cow-protection, I invite all local Associations and those interested in the cattle problem, including the Agriculture Department of the Government of India as also the provincial Governments, to favour me with such literature and statistics as they may possess on the cattle problem, the conducting of dairies, tanneries, etc. The meeting of the Committee of the Association takes place in Bombay on the 3rd inst., at which I hope to announce the choice of a Secretary and a permanent Treasurer. I hope, too, that those who undertook to enroll a certain number of members, will be able to announce the fulfilment of their undertaking. The literature I have asked for may be sent to the address of the All-India Cow-Protection Association, Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati.

Spinning at a Government Institute

There is at Serampore a weaving institute run by the Government of Bengal, through its Department of Industries, where hand-spinning is being systematically taught. I was curious to know its progress and the methods of instruction. I, therefore, applied for permission to visit the Institute which was readily granted. Mr. Hoogwerf showed me round. There was hand-weaving, dyeing, and spinning not restricted to cotton only, but extended to jute, silk, etc.

I propose, however, to confine my attention to cotton-spinning only. I appreciated the anxiety of the staff about it, but I discovered at once that there was not that technical ability and guidance which one would expect in a teaching institution. I had gone there to find a spinning expert with faith in hand-spinning. I had expected to find also up-to-date spinning-wheels. I say this not by way of idle criticism, but in the hope of definite improvement taking place in the near future. Some of the spinning-wheels I saw there were indifferently made and open to the same objections which I have raised in these columns to many specimens I saw during my tour. Some of them even created a jarring sound. The slivers were also not of the best. Under the circumstances I should not at all wonder if in a short time one finds a report to the effect that the experiment in hand-spinning was a failure. Any experiment, before it can be pronounced a failure, must be given the fairest chance. It must, therefore, be conducted by one who has faith in it, and the requisite ability. There is, I understand, a desire to introduce instruction in power-loom weaving also at the Institute. As it is, the Institute is living on starvation wages. It is intended to promote cottage industries. In my opinion, the introduction of the power-loom will be a waste of public money, and I say this not because of my disbelief in power-looms, but because it does not promote the object for which the Institute has been founded. Every rupee voted for its management must be devoted to the development of cottage industries, and, therefore, all the activities of the Institute should be devoted to the exploration of possibilities of hand-spinning, and the antecedent processes and instruction therein.

One thing I noticed in the Institute which can be copied by all national institutions where hand-spinning is taught and developed. Mr. Hoogwerf took me to his home which contains testing instruments for testing the strength and the count of yarn, its evenness, the staple of cotton and the durability of cloth when it is woven. If some of these simple instruments are kept in national institutions and judiciously used, they will help spinners to make rapid progress and to check their spinning.

I must not omit an institution which is run chiefly from the aid of the Government Institute and is situated near by. It is really a home for girls to which a missionary lady has devoted herself. There, too, hand-spinning is one of the things taught. But my criticism applies equally to this home. The superintendent, in spite of all her will to make it a success, cannot do so, until she herself learns the art, so as to enable her to know a good

wheel from a bad [one] and to know when spinning is done properly.

Young India, 3-9-1925

78. WHAT OF THE WEST?

A European friend thus writes:

> What can be done, what would you suggest that could be tried in favour of the starving millions of the West? By starving millions I mean the masses of the European and American proletariat who are being driven to the abyss, who live a life not worth the name, full of the direst privations, who can nourish no dream of future relief by any form of swaraj, who are perhaps more hopeless than the millions of India because the faith in God, the consolation of religion, has left them to be replaced by nothing but hatred.
>
> The iron hands which press down the Indian nation are at work there also. The devilish system is at work in each of these independent countries; politics do not count as there is a close solidarity of greed. Vice is devastating these masses who naturally try to escape the hell of their life at any cost, at the cost of making it a greater hell, and who have no longer the outlet of religious hopes, as Christianity by siding for centuries with the powerful and the greedy has lost all credit.
>
> Of course, I expect Mahatmaji to answer that the only way to salvation for these masses, if there is any left, if the whole Western world is not already doomed, lies in the application of a disciplined non-violent resistance carried on on a large scale. But there are no traditions of ahimsa in the European soil and mind. Even the spreading of the doctrine would encounter huge difficulties, what about its right understanding and application!

The problem underlying the question so sincerely put by the friend lies outside my orbit. I, therefore, attempt an answer merely in courteous recognition of friendship between the questioner and myself. I confess that no value attaches to my answer, save what we attach to every considered argument. I know neither the diagnosis of the European disease nor the remedy in the same sense that I claim to know both in the case of India.

I, however, feel that fundamentally the disease is the same in Europe as it is in India, in spite of the fact that in the former country the people enjoy political self-government. No mere transference of political power in India will satisfy my ambition, even though I hold such transference to be a vital necessity of

Indian national life. The peoples of Europe have no doubt political power but no swaraj. Asian and African races are exploited for their partial benefit, and they, on their part, are being exploited by the ruling class or caste under the sacred name of democracy. At the root, therefore, the disease appears to be the same as in India. The same remedy is, therefore, likely to be applicable. Shorn of all the camouflage, the exploitation of the masses of Europe is sustained by violence.

Violence on the part of the masses will never remove the disease. Anyway, up to now experience shows that success of violence has been short-lived. It has led to greater violence. What has been tried hitherto has been a variety of violence and artificial checks dependent mainly upon the will of the violent. At the crucial moment these checks have naturally broken down. It seems to me, therefore, that sooner or later, the European masses will have to take to non-violence if they are to find their deliverance. That there is no hope of their taking to it in a body and at once does not baffle me. A few thousand years are but a speck in the vast time circle. Someone has to make a beginning with a faith that will not flinch. I doubt not that the masses, even of Europe, will respond, but what is more emergent in point of time is not so much a large experiment in non-violence as a precise grasp of the meaning of deliverance.

From what will the masses be delivered? It will not do to have a vague generalization and to answer "from exploitation and degradation". Is not the answer this that they want to occupy the status that capital does today? If so, it can be attained only by violence. But if they want to shun the evils of capital, in other words, if they would revise the viewpoint of capital, they would strive to attain a juster distribution of the products of labour. This immediately takes us to contentment and simplicity, voluntarily adopted. Under the new outlook multiplicity of material wants will not be the aim of life, the aim will be rather their restriction consistently with comfort. We shall cease to think of getting what we can, but we shall decline to receive what all cannot get. It occurs to me that it ought not to be difficult to make a successful appeal to the masses of Europe in terms of economics, and a fairly successful working of such an experiment must lead to immense and unconscious spiritual results. I do not believe that the spiritual law works on a field of its own. On the contrary, it expresses itself only through the ordinary activities of life. It thus affects the economic, the social, and the political fields. If the masses of Europe can be persuaded to adopt the view I have

suggested, it will be found that violence will be wholly unnecessary to attain the aim and they can easily come to their own by following out the obvious corollaries of non-violence. It may even be that what seems to me to be so natural and feasible for India, may take longer to permeate the inert Indian masses than the active European masses. But I must reiterate my confession that all my argument is based on suppositions and assumptions and must, therefore, be taken for what it is worth.

Young India, 3-9-1925

79. *INDIA AND SOUTH AFRICA*

The following cable has been received by me from Mr. Amed Bhayat, President of a mass meeting of Indians held in Durban:

> The Asiatic Bill[1] in the Union Parliament is far reaching in its results. It is inequitous and disastrous to Indian interests and is deliberate violation of Gandhi-Smuts understanding[2] to recognize vested interests. The Bill provides for allocating residential and trading areas only within which Indians may buy and lease property. In rural districts Indians will be confined to thirty miles from the coast line wherein areas may be defined. The result will be that the business of thousands of Indians must cease on the expiry of present leases. It amounts to compulsory segregation, deliberate deprivation of Indian property. Ultimate aim is apparently repatriation and confiscation of rights. The right of *bona-fide* Indians to enter the Union is seriously jeopardized. Many provisions of the Bill will enable the Government to declare Indians as prohibited immigrants and domicile rights will be practically forfeited. More absence over three years causes forfeiture. The wives and children of domiciled Indians cannot enter the Union after five years from August 1925. Thousand ex-indentured Indians who are now for thirty years here and their descendants may be declared prohibited immigrants and cannot claim domicile. South African born Indians domiciled in one province of the Union must return to the province of their birth, and there also into segregated areas. Indians born here could also be declared prohibited immigrants if unsuitable to the requirements of the Union. Such prohibited Indians will lose all property and vested rights in the Union and be driven away. Protest mass meeting Natal Indians

[1] The Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill, introduced in the Union Parliament in July 1925. The Bill was intended to prevent the acquisition of land by Asiatics save in certain specified areas.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XII.

> been called for 31st in Durban. We rely upon you for creating strong influential public opinion so that the Indian Government may be roused into determined action to protect us. Affront to Indian nation must be met with dignified protests from India. The insult is gratuitous and we resent same in a most strenuous and emphatic manner. We implore you to press Indian Government to give immediate public expression to its attitude as supineness may be misunderstood by all concerned.

Although it has been published in the Press, it can bear repetition here. I have also received a copy of the *Gazette* containing the full text of the Bill. It is a long Bill divided into three chapters, containing 27 sections and a schedule. It occupies 9 foolscap sides closely printed. I do not print the Bill, as without the aid of previous enactments with which it deals and which it modifies or repeals, it is not capable of being understood by the reader. Suffice it to observe here that the cablegram faithfully summarizes the restrictions sought to be imposed by the Bill. It reduces the position of the resident Indian population to such an extent that, without the Union Government having to pay any compensation whatsoever, there will be no Indian settlers in South Africa within a few years' time. If the provisions of the Bill are applied with enough stringency, there will be powers given to the administration to freeze out every Indian, no matter what the step may be, in the land of his adoption and even of his birth, for the Bill makes no distinction between Indians born in South Africa and domiciled. The safeguards provided by the Bill are all illusory and can be rendered perfectly nugatory. That the Bill has not yet become law is a matter of little comfort. The Bill is an indication of the determination of the Union Government to starve the Indians out of South Africa. Mr. Malan has made no secret of it. It is a matter of time when every Indian will have left South Africa. Let the reader remember, or know, that the Chinese labourers who were imported for developing the gold mines of Johannesburg, were summarily repatriated when the Government had made up its mind. The Chinese had no voice. So it will be with Indians unless the Government of India choose to do its duty. Mr. Bhayat has made a pathetic appeal to us here. So far as public opinion is concerned, it is unanimously for the Indian settlers. Unfortunately for them, it is at present ineffective. Such as it is, it will certainly be mobilized for the purpose of preventing the impending spoliation of our countrymen in South Africa in total disregard of the agreement of 1914, which was designed to guarantee the then existing rights of the Indian residents in South Africa.

Young India, 3-9-1925

80. DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

I am leaving Bengal not without much sorrow. I have almost become domiciled in Bengal. I shall miss my daily pilgrimage to Basanti Devi, and I shall miss the happy smiling faces of the numerous subscribers who have been coming daily from various parts. I know that if we have not reached ten lakhs, it is not because of want of devotion to the memory of Deshbandhu or of will on the part of the Bengalis, but because of the universally defective organization for which we are responsible. Had it been possible to canvass every village in Bengal, we would have long ago made up the full total. But even as it is, the sum of Rs. 7,74,165-10-5½ is not unworthy of Bengal. I have had a rough calculation made, and the result shows that the resident Marwaris have contributed over Rs. 140,000, the resident Gujaratis have contributed nearly Rs. 60,000, and the balance is contributed by the Bengalis in Bengal, and outside Bengal, including small sums from other provinces. The burden now rests upon those who are in charge of the funds to fulfil the objects for which it has been raised.

There remains still the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Organized collection for it has not yet begun, Pandit Jawaharlal has circulated a list[1] of collections up to the 23rd August, which brings the total to Rs. 2,002-8-6 and which I give below as an interesting study.

Young India, 3-9-1925

81. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

Some friends have been telling me that the date 22nd September for the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee is an inconvenient one for the Bengalis in view of the forthcoming Puja holidays. The date has been fixed in consultation with Pandit Motilal Nehru who has chosen it after consultation with the members of the Assembly. The original date fixed has been anticipated for the convenience of these members so that they might not have a double journey. Had the 1st of October been retained, it would not have been possible to fix the venue at Patna. Even as it is, a

[1] Not reproduced here, the list showed contributions from almost all over the country.

telegram has been received from Sind protesting against the venue being fixed at Patna. I appreciate the difficulty of the Sindhi friends. But Patna has been chosen after much consultation and for the convenience of the majority of the members. The real Puja holiday commences on the 24th and I have promised the Bengali friends that, even though there may have to be a late night sitting, I shall finish the deliberations of the All-India Congress Committee on the 22nd so as to free the members to leave for Calcutta the night of 22nd. If any routine matters requiring the attention of the All-India Congress Committee remain over, and on which Bengali friends might not have any fixed views, subject to their consent, the proceedings will be prolonged beyond the 22nd. But the main purpose for which the meeting is being convened will be finished on the 22nd. I hope to be in Patna on the 20th. 21st is my day of silence, and I shall be free to discuss with friends who might arrive on the 20th any question that they may wish to discuss in regard to the proposed change in the constitution. Needless to say that no change in the constitution will be adopted unless there is an absolute unanimity. I hope all the members of the A.I.C.C. will attend the forthcoming meeting.

If all goes well, it is my desire also to inaugurate the All-India Spinners' Association and to discuss matters relating to the spinning-wheel and khaddar. I therefore invite all khadi workers who may wish to help at the framing of the constitution of this organization to attend.

The Hindu, 3-9-1925

82. LETTER TO V. L. PHADKE

Bhadra Vad 1 [September 3, 1925][1]

BHAI MAMA[2],

I have your letter. You may certainly sit with Vallabhbhai and prepare a budget as you please. It will have to be passed. If you wish to stay on in the Sangh who can throw you out? I shall reach the Ashram on the 5th and stay there till the 9th.

[1] The dates, 5th and 9th, of Gandhiji's reaching the Ashram and of his leaving it, which are mentioned in the letter, coincide with September 5, 1925, when in fact he arrived at Satyagraha Ashram, and September 9, 1925, when he departed for Bihar.

[2] Vithal Laxman Phadke was popularly known as *Mama*, 'maternal uncle'.

Give the Samiti all the information it wants about the Ashram[1]. You may write to say that the deed has been passed on to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3811

83. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[*September 3, 1925*]

Mahatma Gandhi arrived in Bombay yesterday. On his arrival at the Victoria Terminus station in the morning he was received by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and several other friends. He is staying in Revashanker Jagjivan's house, Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, his usual Bombay residence. Knowing that he would soon be caught up in the maze of engagements that have been fixed for him even in advance of his arrival, a representative of *The Chronicle* sought an interview with him soon after his arrival at his residence. Gandhiji readily consented to give one, though visitors had already begun to call. He had a slightly tired look but otherwise was as cheery and fit as ever.

Our representative began by asking about Gandhiji's outstanding impressions of his Bengal tour and he replied that so far as khaddar was concerned, the thing that counted most, the province in general showed as much enthusiasm for khaddar and as much disposition to work out the programme as any other province. It might even do more. Asked what advice he had given or would give to the Bengal Swarajists with regard to the policy in the Legislative Council, he replied that he had only advised them to follow the lead of Pandit Motilal Nehru. Gandhiji had by now taken out his twirligig[2] and begun plying it.

"What remedy would you suggest against the prevailing stagnation in the country?" was the next question. He fixed a fond look on the twirligig, drew out a fine long thread, and said with a beaming smile:

Well, I have already prescribed my remedy. Spin, spin, spin, till stagnation vanishes. That is my remedy and it holds the field till another or an alternative remedy is suggested and a case made out for it.

Our representative pointed out that village panchayats were being suggested in several places, especially in Maharashtra and also co-operative societies for khaddar work as adjuncts for village organization. Gandhiji said:

[1] Antyaja Ashram at Godhra in Gujarat, managed by the addressee
[2] The *takli* or spindle-like contrivance for spinning

They are all right where they can properly be worked out in a spirit of absolute self-reliance. Where this spirit prevails, I would welcome almost any organization as better than none, but I fear that in many cases these institutions might turn out to be additional instruments to accustom people to lean on officials or their agents. What we want to unite and vitalize the whole nation is a common industry which all can carry on entirely by themselves. Universal spinning is the thing.

"Do you see any signs, even if stray, of the Hindu-Muslim tension easing?" he was asked next. He said gravely:

No, it is growing worse, but only to grow better. I fear the growing tension may end in an explosion, though we shall try to make it as little violent as possible. But with the reaction following, the two communities must coalesce, and absorption in common constructive work can keep down the violence of the explosion and will further cement the union when it comes.

"What reply would you have the Congress give to Lord Birkenhead?" The prompt reply was:

More work and more briskly on the lines I have already suggested.

"May we not," our representative asked, "take him at his word in a sporting mood and spring a swaraj scheme upon him?"

If the offer were made in a genuine sporting mood we could accept it so, but, in the absence of any actual signs of a change of heart on his part, I only fear that the offer to consider any scheme prepared by us may turn out to be a trap. I would not walk into it.

Asked if he would not convene a representative leaders' conference to re-explore the avenues to the unity of all parties, he replied:

I have answered this question several days ago. I am also referring to the topic in today's *Young India*. Informal attempts are being made but the time for a formal conference is not yet. At present almost each party wants unity, no doubt, but unity on its own terms. No conference can succeed under these circumstances. As soon as I see any general disposition to subordinate one's individual or party views to the present needs of the country, I shall be the first to call such a conference.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-9-1925

84. *MESSAGE ON CENTENARY OF DADABHAI NAOROJI*

Dadabhai justly earned the affectionate title of the G.O.M. of India. Was it not he who first introduced us to the problem of the deep poverty of the masses? In discovering the growing poverty of the masses Dadabhai put his finger upon the root evil of the present system of Government. In my opinion, therefore, the best way we can celebrate the forthcoming Centenary is to do something tangible for dealing with the problem of poverty. It cannot be dealt with satisfactorily save through the universal adoption of spinning-wheel and khaddar. Hence it is that I have unhesitatingly recommended the celebration of the Centenary by making collections for khaddar and charkha, by holding khaddar exhibitions, by hawking khaddar and in every becoming manner pushing forward the cause of khaddar and the spinning-wheel, in other words the cause of the millions.

The Bombay Chronicle, 4-9-1925

85. *INTERVIEW TO "FORWARD"*[1]

BOMBAY,
September 4, 1925

A glowing tribute to Bengal and the Swaraj Party was paid by Mahatma Gandhi in course of a special interview for *Forward* which I had this morning. Questioned whether the Swaraj Party had been weakened by Deshbandhu's death, Mahatmaji replied:

Any party, any institution must be weakened after Deshbandhu's death. But that in no sense means that the Party will break up. On the contrary up to now the Party has been exceptionally loyal to the memory of Deshbandhu and has to the best of its ability carried out his wishes.

Has the resignation of Dr. Suhrawardy had any adverse effect on the Party?

Personally, I do not see.

[1] Some of the questions and answers occuring in this report are the same as those in "Interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*", 3-9-1925, and are not being reproduced here.

In your opinion, Mahatmaji, are the election of Mr. Patel[1] as President of the Assembly and Panditji's acceptance of a seat on the Skeen Committee[2] consistent with the Swaraj Party's principles?

I see no inconsistency in either of these things. Any party which is growing in strength or wants to grow in strength must adapt itself to the circumstances. I think the acceptance by Panditji of a seat on the Skeen Committee and the election of Mr. Patel were fine strokes.

Forward, 5-9-1925

86. SPEECH AT DADABHAI NAOROJI CENTENARY MEETING, BOMBAY[3]

September 4, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi said he was a real worshipper of Dadabhai Naoroji, the Dada of India. Any man or woman who did his or her duty and died in the performance of it, the name of such a person would never die. Dadabhai was with them in spirit, although he was not there in his physical body and his sweet voice could not be heard by them any more. The passage of time had merely made Dadabhai's name dearer to them and it was more deeply engraved on their hearts. It was in 1888 that he had occasion to sit at the feet of Dadabhai and, although he was not reading newspapers then—in the same way as he was not reading them now—he had heard the name of Dadabhai. A Deccani gentleman gave him a letter of introduction to Dadabhai, although he was not acquainted with him and, when he took it to him in England, although Dadabhai did not know the writer of the letter, he took him (Gandhiji) to his heart and said: If you are ever in any difficulty come to me. Dadabhai was living in England not to enjoy life, or play any games or to go to the theatre, but to serve India. He there had a large number of Indian students under his care, to whom he acted guardian, but had he done only that he would never have been remembered by Indians. Although Dadabhai had never been into the villages, yet his heart was so big that it found room for the poor villager. He not only had a heart big enough

[1] Vithalbhai Patel

[2] The Committee, set up under the chairmanship of Sir Andrew Skeen, had been asked to consider whether it was desirable to start a military college in India. The demand for such a college had been made in a resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly in Delhi.

[3] The meeting, organized by 13 representatives of local associations, was held in the Cowasji Jehangir Hall and was presided over by Gandhiji. Sarojini Naidu and Shaukat Ali, also spoke.

to include all the Indian communities, but even the poorest of the poor were remembered by him. He knew that the poor villagers were dumb and he wanted to make their voice heard by the rulers of this land. He knew that the villagers could not get even one square meal a day, not to speak of such luxuries as ghee and milk. And what Dadabhai had said 30 or 40 years ago was true even to this day. Dadabhai knew that, so long as a majority of Indians were skeletons and were mere bags of bones, they could not achieve anything. In England Dadabhai had a small office-room for doing his work and he lived there like an ascetic serving the cause of India. The speaker said he was a true worshipper of Dadabhai and it did not matter to him even if his idol had blemishes. The audience that night had come to that meeting to worship Dadabhai, but how many of them were actuated by a sincere desire to do so? Dadabhai had taught him two things: that he must give his idol his fullest love and worship without any reservation and that, if he wanted to serve India, he must serve the poor. Gandhiji said he could only serve the poor by becoming the very poorest of the poor, the meanest of the mean, by becoming a Hindu, a Muslim and a Parsi, for to Dadabhai all Indians were alike. Although Dadabhai was a staunch Zoroastrian, he never disliked the other communities. He even respected Englishmen. Dadabhai never said that India alone should be great at the cost of the whole world. He was willing to sacrifice India for the good of the world, but for that purpose a free nation was required, and he knew that a slave nation could not do anything. Therefore, through his noble life he worshipped at the shrine of the goddess of freedom and liberty. It was said that if they offered their God even a simple flower, He was pleased and that merely showed how easy it was to pelase Him, provided they were sincere. The best way of celebrating the centenary of Dadabhai was to resolve to serve the country. Gandhiji asked the audience not to follow whatever Dadabhai did, but do only that which would please his soul. He who could serve India ceaselessly, sincerely, and whole-heartedly would always be honoured, and to do that was the only way they could celebrate the centenary of Dadabhai.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-9-1925

87. COW-PROTECTION

The more I study the problem of protecting cows, the more I realize its importance. This problem will become increasingly serious in India, since it involves the economic well-being of the country. I believe that from its very nature religion embraces economic, political and other problems. The religion which is opposed to true economics is no religion, nor that which is opposed to true politics. Economics devoid of religion should be shunned, and political power uninformed with the spirit of religion is Satanic. There is no such thing as dharma unrelated to economic and other activities. Individuals and society, both survive through dharma and perish without it. Accumulation of wealth, that is commerce, through truthful means fosters the growth of society, but commerce carried on without any regard for truth destroys it. Many instances can be cited to show that what is gained through falsehood, through dishonest and devious means is but short-lived and proves harmful in the end.

Hence, while discussing our duty to protect cows we must consider its economic aspect as well. If cow-protection is opposed to true economics, we have no choice but to give up the effort. Not only that, but we shall discover in that case that we cannot succeed in protecting cows even if we wish to do so.

It is because we have not even thought about the economic benefits of cow-protection that, in a country where countless people regard the protection of the cow and her offspring as a sacred duty, the latter starve. We see them reduced to mere skin and bone, so much so that all their bones can be counted, and they are slaughtered only because of the indifference of Hindus. Cow-protection involves the very existence of Indian agriculture. Cow-slaughter would cease if every Hindu understood the economics of cow-protection. The destruction of cows through the sheer stupidity of Hindus must be a hundred times greater than their slaughter in the name of religion. So long as Hindus themselves do not understand the right method of protecting cows, not all the crores of rupees which they can spend will save the latter.

In Gujarat, *Banias*, *Bhatias* and Marwaris take interest in the cause of cow-protection. They spend large sums on it. And even among them the Marwaris, especially, go to great lengths. Marwari business men run the largest number of *goshalas* in India.

They cheerfully contribute lakhs of rupees towards these and it is for this reason that I have said that the problem of protecting cows cannot be solved without the help of Marwaris. I have often visited *goshalas*, but I cannot say that I saw any which was an ideal one.

These reflections were provoked by my visit to the *goshala* at Liluah in Calcutta. Two and a half lakh rupees are spent on it every year, but the return is practically nil. A *goshala* which gets two and a half lakh rupees every year should be able to save the lives of not less than 10,000 head of cattle in a year. Even the cattle tended by this institution do not come to so many. The organizers are not to be blamed for this, nor are they dishonest. The secretary who took me round to show the institution is serving it to the best of his ability. The system itself is to blame for this result. We do not know how to run such institutions, and so the people do not derive the fullest benefit from them.

Practical ability is not considered necessary in matters concerning religion. Such institutions are regarded as well run simply if those who manage them do not misappropriate funds. In a business firm in which additional capital of two and a half lakh rupees is invested every year, the best available paid workers are employed, whereas in this case persons engaged in their own business spare some of their time as a social duty. Those who do so deserve to be congratulated, but their work does not help the cause of cow-protection. This cause requires full-time services of able and efficient persons. Only men of spiritual knowledge who live a life of self-denial and self-sacrifice will offer such services, or able, worldly men if properly paid. It would not matter if those who donate money for charitable purposes are not practical persons, but those who run charity institutions must be more capable and hard-working than even business men. All the moral rules which apply to business men also apply to charitable institutions. If *goshalas* were run as commercial concerns, men with scientific knowledge of such matters would be working in them, and they would daily conduct new experiments and save the lives of more and more cows, would carry out many experiments about rearing cattle in *goshalas* and about ensuring the purity and increasing the quantity of milk. It is quite obvious that the knowledge about rearing cattle which can be obtained through *goshalas* cannot be got elsewhere. Since, however, they are charity institutions, they are not being run properly and no one is concerned about them. It would be slighting the Vedas if schools which are meant to teach them taught us the least about them; the present-day *goshalas* are in the same condition.

I have doubts whether the *goshala* at Liluah is properly located. That the buildings are not of the right kind can be judged even by a layman like me who knows nothing about the scientific method of running *goshalas*. There are no instruments there for examining the quality of the milk and other products. There is no one there who can say whether it is possible to increase the yield of milk. The institution seems to be the responsibility of no one. I would advice those who are in charge of it to consult experts in the management of *goshalas* and employ paid workers who know their job and leave it to them to run it. Institutions of this kind should train people in rearing cattle and bullocks, provide instruction in regard to improved techniques of castration, cattle feed and the methods of growing them, hygienic processes of obtaining milk and of removing skin and processing it. So long as there is indifference in those matters, we should feel that *goshalas* are not being put to the best use. We should feel ashamed even if a single cow or bullock dies an untimely death, or is exported. I am convinced that this can be easily prevented through *goshalas*.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 6-9-1925

88. SPEECH AT LABOUR UNION SCHOOLS, AHMEDABAD[1]

September 6, 1925

I am pleased to hear the report of your work and I offer you my congratulations. I have observed the activities of your schools during my tours. I see what classes of children are taught here and what sort of education is imparted to them. Nowhere else have I seen the orderly management found in these schools. This does not mean that I have some sort of partiality for these schools. Since there is such a possibility, I have made allowance for it. And so I should like to stick to my opinion. This appreciation is not meant to flatter you. I have expressed it because it is well deserved. My duty is rather to point out your defects than to congratulate you. I can see clearly your efforts at strict observance of the rules of cleanliness, but I would urge you to look at the problem from my view-point. I was shocked to find dirt in the nails of the girl there. It is uncleanliness; it is a wrong thing. The roll-call is

[1] The meeting was arranged by the organizers, teachers and students of the schools. *Vide* also "Notes", 10-9-1925, sub-title, "A Remarkable Record".

not complete until the nails, teeth, etc., of every child are inspected. We contract perhaps more diseases through the nails and teeth than otherwise. These two things are most serviceable and it is easy to maintain them in good condition. Do not yield any scope here for "as far as possible". The cleanliness of the nose and eyes is of lesser importance. The children themselves will learn to take care of them. It is necessary to inspect their hair also.

I congratulate you on your work with the *takli*. No national school has, I think, made so much progress in this respect. I add my own experience of the *takli* to yours. It was a wrong experiment to have introduced in the school the spinning-wheel which does not possess the potency of the *takli*. Even if the spinning-wheel is completely destroyed, the *takli* has the potency to bring about a boycott of foreign cloth. The spinning-wheel is a nuisance though it does good. It is an ornament to a hut. The *takli* is an ornament only to a school. It is a top which is useful. I congratulate you also on having such a large number of children here.

It would be a misfortune if the mill-owners failed to encourage these schools. It will bring them credit if they develop them. It is their duty to do so. I am deeply grieved to learn that the grant of Rs. 1,200 which used to be received from the Tilak Swaraj Fund has stopped coming in. The grant ought to be resumed. But Anasuyabehn ought to be relieved of her anxiety by making some other aid available. What can I say to the rich who would not take advantage of the services of honorary workers? I do wish that you too should listen to me just as Mr. G. G. has done. That is my prayer to you. You have to request the mill-owners to donate funds for your education.

The Arab brushes his teeth as he travels about in the ship and hence the Somali Arab is healthy and handsome. Can black-skinned people not look handsome?

God is a wonderful watch-maker. He alone can set right his watch that has gone out of order. Harijan children are my adopted children; therefore they should keep themselves very clean. One should have a pure tongue, a pure mind and a pure body.

[From Gujarati]

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VIII

89. SPEECH AT MEETING OF LABOUR UNION, AHMEDABAD[1]

[*September 6, 1925*][2]

Gandhiji in his speech laid especial stress on the labourers' duty. He knew they had grievances about insufficient water supply, lack of dining sheds, proper cleaning of latrines, beatings and ill-treatment by jobbers and numerous breakages of ends in the throstle department and consequent less work and less wages. But he was sure that some of the things depended on themselves, on their cultivation of proper self-respect. He was glad to note that the Union had redeemed the debts of some of them and substituted cheap loans for loans on exorbitant rates of interest. But it was a sad commentary on their way of life that they should have to borrow so much. Their wages may be insufficient, but he had no doubt that if they were more thrifty, free from drink and other evil habits, they would not have to be indebted. He was very glad that the mill-hands recognized the difficult situation of the mill-owners at the present moment. He said:

I am glad, you recognize this. You cannot ask for more pay when they are going through serious difficulties. A time might come when loyal labourers may have to come forward with an offer to serve without any wages, in order that the mills may not have to be closed down. But I know that you are not prepared today for that. There is not that amount of trust between you and the mill-owners. You are labouring under numerous injustices, and unless the mill-owners have won you over by considerate and loving treatment, you are going to do nothing of the kind today. But that is a consummation towards which I want you to work.[3]

Mahatma Gandhi said that they were benefited by the establishment of the Union. Still their grievances were manifold. For that they themselves were responsible. It was easy to point out the defects of the mill agents. If they remedied their own defects, they could impress the mill agents as well as others. They could achieve a great deal by being courteous and truthful.

[1] This was the annual general meeting of the Labour Union at which Gandhiji presided. No full version of the speech is available. But *Young India* and *The Bombay Chronicle* seem to have reported different parts of it.

[2] As given by *The Bombay Chronicle*

[3] This is taken from *Young India*. What follows is from *The Bombay Chronicle*.

He wished they might regain the wages that were cut and obtain higher wag
but they should know that there was trade depression and that the mi
had to fight with Government. At such a time it was their duty not to exp(
higher wages. There was mutual distrust. The burden of dispelling this d
trust lay on their shoulders. If they worked efficiently without the supervisi
of overseers they would not have to ask for the redress of grievances.

Young India, 10-9-1925, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 8-9-1925

90. NOTES

A Remarkable Record

I have before me a brief and business-like report of the remarkable work that is silently but most efficiently being done by the Labour Union managed under the gentle care of Shrimati Anasuyabai. It deals with the educational work being done among the labourers.

In 1924 there were 8 day schools. Today there are 9. Of these two are for all children, six for untouchables and one for Mussalmans. There were 11 night schools in 1924. Today there are 15. Of these, 1 for all, 8 for untouchables, 5 for Mussalmans and 1 for *Vaghris*. In 1924 there were 1,119 scholars and the attendance was 979·4. There were 692 untouchables, 221 touchables and 206 Mussalmans. In the beginning of the year there were 1,166 scholars, 798 being untouchables, 219 touchables and 169 Mussalmans and 60 *Vaghris*. The attendance was 907·92. At the present moment there are 1,285.

The boys and girls learn all the subjects taught in the ordinary primary schools. In addition they have hand-spinning. The management at first tried the wheels. Among so many boys and girls, the wheels were found to be too expensive and inconvenient because of the space required. They have, therefore, taken up the *takli* which every scholar can possess. It was a fine sight to see several hundred boys and girls spinning all at the same time. Their average speed is 30 to 40 yards per hour each. They have already spun 2 mds. and 8 seers of good yarn.

There is also a residential school with 16 untouchable boys. Of these 6 pay Rs. 5 each towards boarding expenses. The rest are free. They learn to card, spin and weave. In 1924, they span 1¼ mds. of yarn and wove 125 yards of khaddar. In 1924, there were 66 teachers, today there are 77 teachers. The total expenses were Rs. 22,254-8-4. Of these Rs. 1,250 monthly were contributed

by the Mill-owners' Association being part of interest on Tilak Swaraj Fund contributed by its members and earmarked for the purpose of the welfare of the labourers. A donation of Rs. 60 per month was received from Mr. Brijvalabhdas Jekisandas. The rest was found by the Union. The residential school expenses were paid by the Provincial Congress Committee.

The most striking fact is the very large number of untouchable children receiving education in these schools. I understand that their parents do not need coaxing. They gladly send their children. If anything, it is the other parents who require to be approached and induced to send theirs.

Needless to say, these schools are independent of all Government aid or control.

Special attention is paid to the cleanliness of these scholars. Indeed, the schools will compare favourably with any primary schools throughout India. I draw the attention of all schoolmasters to the necessity of cleanliness and tidiness among the scholars. It requires no special effort daily to hold a parade of all the scholars before commencing the classes and examine their teeth, nails, ears, eyes, etc. I have seen neglect of these simple things even in schools claiming to be model schools.

Is It Over-confidence?

An esteemed friend, jealous of my reputation for correct conduct, asks how it is that I feel confident of my being right in my latest attitude of whole-hearted support to the Swaraj Party. Have I not made Himalayan blunders? Do I not notice, the friend asks, that many of my No-changer friends are bewildered over what to them appears to be my inconsistency? Might I not be guilty of over-confidence?

I do not think so. For a man of truth must ever be confident, if he has also equal need to be diffident. His devotion to truth demands the fullest confidence. His consciousness of the fallibility of human nature must make him humble and therefore ever ready to retrace his steps immediately he discovers his error. It makes no difference to his confidence that he had previously made Himalayan blunders. His confession and penance make him, if anything, stronger for future action. Discovery of errors makes the votary of truth more cautious of believing things and forming things and forming conclusions, but once he has made up his mind, his conscience must remain unshaken. His errors may result in men's reliance upon his judgments being shaken, but he must not doubt the truth of his position once he has come to a con-

clusion. It should further be borne in mind that my errors have been errors of calculation and judging men, not in appreciating the true nature of truth and ahimsa or in their application. Indeed these errors and my prompt confessions have made me surer, if possible, of my insight into the implications of truth and ahimsa. For I am convinced that my action in suspending civil disobedience at Ahmedabad, Bombay and Bardoli has advanced the cause of India's freedom and world's peace. I am convinced that because of the suspensions we are nearer swaraj than we would have been without, and this I say in spite of despair being written in thick black letters on the horizon. Such being my deep conviction, I cannot help being confident of my present position as regards Swarajists and other matters. It is traceable to one source only, a lively understanding of the implications of truth and ahimsa.

All-India Memorial

Sjt. Manilal Kothari has already commenced his operations. The Parsi friend whom he induced to subscribe Rs. 25,000 told me that it was impossible for him to resist Manilal Kothari. The *Bhatia* friend who subscribed Rs. 51,000 must have felt the same thing. But I assure them that whilst their donations are no doubt princely, they are not too much for the purpose to which they are to be devoted. Our duty to the memory of Deshbandhu will not have been performed unless by khaddar work we achieve the exclusion of foreign cloth. And that is not possible without men and money. I hope, therefore, that the response will be quick and generous. Up till now Rs. 1,087-3-3 have been received at the *Young India* Office and Rs. 2,096-12-6 by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at Allahabad (up to 29-8-1925).

Young India, 10-9-1925

91. A VILLAGE EXPERIMENT

The following will be read with interest by everyone concerned with village reconstruction:[1]

This is in many respects a remarkable experiment. Quiet work has gone on without fuss, without advertisement, and practically without capital and this has been possible because the people were willing to revise their taste in dress material and to make use of their idle hours. The population of the village is 640. The cloth budget is estimated at Rs. 3,640. Therefore, when all the villagers are clothed in khaddar, they will add to their annual income Rs. 3,640 by simply using their waste moments. There is no village reconstruction scheme which can possibly yield such brilliant, tangible and quick results. This khaddar work is also an object-lesson in co-operation. And by the time khaddar becomes a permanent part of the village life, selfless village workers can, if they will, promote sanitation, education and social reform. This is practical self-government. Imagine thousands of such villages bound together by a common tie through khaddar, and you have swaraj for the asking. For when India learns to deny itself the use of foreign cloth, she will have sterilized the many undesirable activities of the British people and paved the way for real swaraj. I hope that the good people of Kanur will not rest content till every man, woman and child living in it habitually wears khaddar. It is to be hoped, too, that the infection will not be confined to Pudur only, but that it will spread from village to village.

Young India, 10-9-1925

[1] Not reproduced here. The writing dealt with the progress of spinning and use of khaddar in Kanur village of Coimbatore district, in South India.

92. ALL-BENGAL DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

Friends have been inquiring whether they may still pay their subscription to the All-Bengal Memorial Fund. So far as the official collection is concerned, it was closed on the 31st ultimo. But if there are any who still wish to pay to *that* fund, they can do so through the Trustees. But whatever may now be received by me will be credited to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial unless the subscriber directs to the contrary.

Young India, 10-9-1925

93. ABOUT UNTOUCHABLES

Sjt. T. N. Sarma of Andhra Desh came to me the other day at Calcutta and asked me certain questions regarding the difficulties found in the path of those who were serving the *Panchamas*[1]. He has now reduced my answers to writing and sent them to me to correct and publish if possible. As they are likely to help workers, I gladly find room for the questions and my answers.

> 1. What methods do you suggest for the propaganda for the removal of untouchability?

Not much lip propaganda is necessary now. Work is propaganda. You should work fearlessly, unmindful of social ostracism, for bettering the condition of the untouchables. Lectures may be arranged when leading men pay you a visit.

> 2. There are two shades of opinion in our Andhra province, and a resolution was proposed to the effect that money should not be spent for the non-*Panchamas* to do propaganda work. Some people think that the *Panchamas* should be educated first, and the demand for the removal should come from them, while others think that paid propaganda should be done among the higher classes to change their hearts, and to make them feel that untouchability is a sin, and pundits and workers should be appointed to do this work.

I would not spend even a single pie over the pundits. If you pay them they become hirelings. They must work for pay. Money should be spent on the *Panchamas* to make them realize their own

[1] Castes regarded as untouchables

position. Our methods should always be non-violent. Men of the so-called higher classes must change their attitude, and remove the ban for their own elevation and purification. If they do not do so and persist in suppressing them, time must come when the untouchables will rebel against us, and may have recourse even to violent methods. I am trying my utmost to prevent such a catastrophe, and so must we all do who believe untouchability to be a sin.

3. Do you think that schools started exclusively for the *Panchamas* will help in any way in removing untouchability?

They must in the long run do so, as all education must. But such schools should not be exclusively *Panchama* schools as boys from other castes also should be welcomed. They will not come at present. But the prejudice will break down in time if the schools are well managed. If you want mixed schools, you must start one in your locality. Suppose you own a house. Nobody can ask you to go away from your house. Bring an untouchable boy to your house and start a school with him. Induce other boys to come and attend that school.

4. In our province encouragement is given to the schools where the children of both the untouchables and the touchables read together.

Yes. You may encourage them. But you should not refuse help to schools or institutions where there are only untouchables.

5. In some Taluk Boards, there are orders that schools will be abolished if admission is refused to the untouchables. Do you advise us to help the *Panchamas* at such places in getting admission through our propagandists?

Certainly. You should help them. But there is no need for special propagandists. Your workers will do for that purpose.

6. Then what about the propaganda work? Do you think that silent work will do?

Yes. There is no good of propaganda when there is no solid work behind to elevate the *Panchamas*.

(In this connection, Gandhiji referred to the Vaikom struggle[1], and said that it had a very tremendous effect on the people of those parts.)

7. Shall we spend money freely for the propaganda at a time when such questions arise?

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVI and XXVII.

Not freely. Solid work is its own propaganda. At Vaikom most of the money is spent for constructive work.

8. Are you going to take up the question of untouchability more vigorously at any time in the near future?

I have already taken up that question as vigorously as possible. We are trying to start schools, dig wells, and build temples, etc., for them wherever it is possible. The work does not stop for want of money. Perhaps you are thinking that nothing is done for them, because it is not advertised in the papers.

9. According to the Belgaum resolution, no school can be called 'national' where *Panchamas* are refused admission.

Certainly. They are not national schools.

10. Do you say that such schools should not be given help from Congress funds, even though they satisfy all the other conditions to be called national schools?

No help should be given.

Young India, 10-9-1925

94. LETTER TO JETHALAL MANSUR

Bhadra Vad 8, '81 [September 10, 1925]

BHAI JETHALAL,

I have your letter. Try to collect soon donations for the temple[1]. How much do you expect from Ramjibhai[2]? The members of his family have donated ornaments also. The delay there will be responsible for the delay in the temple construction. It is also necessary to know who will be the priest in charge of this temple.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 11135 (1)

[1] For Harijans at Lathi, chief town of the then princely State of Lathi in Saurashtra

[2] Presumably, Ramjibhai of Lathi who, with his wife Gangabehn, responded to Gandhiji's appeal for reviving in Gujarat the craft of weaving from hand-spun yarn, and taught it to others in Sabarmati Ashram.

95. LETTER TO JETHALAL MANSUR

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
Tuesday, [After *September 10, 1925*][1]

BHAI JETHALAL,

I have your letter. Where is the trust deed[2]? Where is the deed of transfer by the State[3] in respect of the land? Who will be the priest? On receiving the answers to these three questions I shall immediately send the money. Our understanding is that the State will contribute as much as the amount you collect and you will receive the same amount through me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 11135(2)

96. SPEECH AT PURULIA[4]

September 12, 1925

Mahatmaji first of all thanked the members of the District Board and the Municipality for the addresses that they had presented to him. In one of the addresses, he said, reference had very fittingly been made and regret had been expressed over the passing away of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das.[5] Although it was now some months that he had passed away, still they had not been able to forget the pang of separation from him. He knew before he entered that town that Purulia was the place of rest for Deshbandhu. And the day he entered his house in that town, he was greatly grieved to find that it was after his death that he had an occasion to enter his house. He thanked the members for all that had been done to perpetuate the memory of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. References had been made in both the addresses to khaddar and the charkha. Charkha, said Mahatmaji, had become the very *mantra* of his life. He did not see any other method by which he

[1] References to the trust deed and the deed of transfer in respect of the land suggest that the letter was written after "Letter to Jethalal", 10-9-1925.
[2] For the temple at Lathi
[3] Lathi State
[4] In district Manbhum, Bihar
[5] Gandhiji had earlier unveiled a portrait of C. R. Das, after the presentation of the addresses.

could get rid of the poverty of India. The poverty of Bihar was well known. Barring Orissa and perhaps one or two more provinces, he thought Bihar was the poorest of all the provinces in the country. There was a time when Bihar used to export to other places some very fine hand-woven cloth made of hand-spun. Like Bengal, Bihar too was famous for production of fine cloth. But today there were people in Bhar who did not know how to satisfy their hunger. And for them there was no other course but to take to the charkha. Today there were thousands of Biharis in Assam earning food in that province and at Calcutta. It would not do for us to leave them there. Man was not born only to amass money. One who lost his soul did great harm to his soul. They could know better than him about the character of those people living in Assam and in Calcutta. But even if they left them out of consideration, there were lakhs of Biharis who did not know what was called two meals a day. They did not know how to earn their livelihood.

I have become a Bihari from the date I began my work in Champaran. If you do not know, I would like to tell you that there in Champaran women could hardly earn 5 pice a day. For males 6 pice or two annas was considered to be too much. Today, although the wages have gone up, still these peoples have to pay commission (*dastur*) out of their wages. Their condition today continues more or less the same as before. But if the charkha was placed in their hands, what would be the result? Let the economists judge for themselves. But it lies in the hands of the educated people to revive it.

It was a fact that the masses followed the higher and the influential. If they went to the villages, preached the charkha to them and plied the wheel themselves, it was only then they could evoke enthusiasm for the charkha among the villagers. If they wanted Bihar to get rid of her poverty, if they wanted to give employment to the unemployed during the time of flood, famine and other scourges of nature, then they must ply the charkha themselves and preach it to the people. But that alone would not do.

They would have to give up their charm for the foreign and even the mill-made cloth of Bombay and Ahmedabad. So long as they did not do that, they would not be able to achieve anything substantial. Their very self-respect demanded that they (the Biharis) should use cloth made in Bihar only and not go in for the mill-products of Bombay and Ahmedabad.

If you are the real well-wishers of India, if you want to serve Bihar sincerely, you must be able to understand and appreciate well this first *mantra* of the charkha.

Mahatmaji proceeding congratulated them on the absence of any communal trouble in the district and hoped that it would continue to be so.

He also congratulated the members on all that was being done by them for the propagation of the charkha and for uplifting of the untouchables. Concluding he appealed for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. He explained that the Fund would be for the scheme for village reconstruction which was so near and dear to Deshbandhu's heart. And the amount collected would be spent through the proposed new organization to be called "The All-India Spinners' Association". He knew that the middle-class people of Bihar were not very rich. But if they appreciated the methods of the charkha and if they approved of the method of utilizing the sum collected, they must contribute their mite to this fund. The major portion of the money collected in Bihar would be spent in this very province.

The Searchlight, 16-9-1925

97. "WHAT SHOULD WE DO?"

Although I stayed in Gujarat for only five days[1], during that period I met co-workers and came to know much through them. I heard, too, about some serious matters. I do not have the time to discuss everything that I heard. Just now I shall write about only one subject. Some co-workers tell me that they do not get money from people in their districts. They are ready to send their children to [national] schools but do not contribute towards their expenses. It is with the greatest difficulty that people are made to spin. What should they do in such circumstances? Why should the Provincial Committee not provide funds?

This is an unworthy attitude. Wherever local help is not available the general rule is not to take up any work. There can be only a few exceptions to this. Where the aim is to spread a completely new idea, help from outside may be taken for a certain period, but this cannot be a permanent practice. The service of *Antyajas* is a cause of this nature. It is a sacred duty. It is possible that local help may not be available for such work in the initial stages. In that case, workers may secure it from other sources. But no such help can be expected from a popularly elected body like the Provincial Committee. The worker should rely on his own influence with people. This rule, however, cannot be followed in the matter of the education of the people. If the residents of a village want facilities for education, they must provide the necessary funds. If they do not do so, we may conclude that no such institution is required

[1] After his four-month tour of Bengal, Gandhiji returned to Gujarat on September 5, and left for Bihar on September 9.

there. Very often, the fault lies with the worker. He may lack strength of character, or ability or may not be hard-working. Such a worker should have patience. He should reform his character, acquire ability through experience and make an effort to be hard-working. This is what we mean by *tapascharya*[1]. Through *tapas*[2] the world exists, through it Bhavani[3] won Shambhu, Savitri brought back Satyavan[4] to life, Lakshmana[5] defeated Indrajit[6] and Rama defeated Ravana. Instances in modern times are there right before us; I would, therefore, strongly advise co-workers to try to obtain local help and wherever this is not available, to limit the field of their work.

Let us consider the limits of the Provincial Committee. Where does it get its funds from? From the districts. What would happen if all the districts looked to it for help and contributed nothing to its funds? The rule is that every area should contribute to the funds of the Provincial Committee and then ask for help from it. I would advise the Provincial Committee to wind up its work if it, too, has to carry it on with funds obtained from outside Gujarat. For this very reason I have always advocated that Gujarat should depend primarily on Gujaratis' money. This is the secret of swaraj. Local autonomy implies local responsibility. We should not be too eager to run a single institution out of a false sense of prestige. Dharma is the only thing we can pursue in opposition to public opinion, and to pursue dharma means to lay down one's life. This does not require any monetary help. Can running a library or a school possibly be one's dharma? Non-co-operation can be. We may bear hardships in employing it. It requires no monetary help whatsoever. If the residents of a village do not wish to get their children educated by me, there should be no question at all of my attracting the children to me against their wishes. If they are ready to send their children but not prepared to contribute funds, that means that they beg for charity. They will get it only if they need it. *Antyajas* are such a class of people, for we have neglected our duty towards them so far. It is, therefore, useless to expect help from the Provincial Committee in every matter. If the latter gives any help under pressure, it would be doing a wrong and may have even to stop business. I know at first hand that some

[1] & [2] *Tapas* is penance generating spiritual strength. *Tapascharya* is the pursuit of *tapas*.

[3] Parvati, consort of Siva also known as Shambhu

[4] Husband of Savitri in the *Mahabharata*

[5] Brother of Rama in the *Ramayana*

[6] Son of Ravana, King of Lanka, in the *Ramayana*

Provincial Committees are reduced to such straits. Gujarat is not in such a plight because its workers weigh everything most carefully in carrying on their work and continually walk on the razor's edge. They are ever vigilant.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-9-1925

98. PURITY

Corruption has gradually entered our public life. A learned gentleman has remarked that our public life has become corrupted ever since the Congress got one crore rupees. There was intense malice in this criticism, but it also contained a drop of nectar. With money in the Congress treasury, temptations followed and laxity came over its working. Why should we work ourselves, [we thought] for what we can obtain with money? Vices do not trumpet their coming. They work as thieves and poisonous germs do. They enter stealthily, without our being aware of their coming. They creep in and lodge themselves as an innocent lamb would creep unnoticed into your home. We cannot get rid of them, however much we try. If we are not on our guard, they pull at us and draw us behind them. Unknown to us, corruption has entered us. It is necessary to be on our guard against it.

Many people have borrowed money from the [Provincial] Committee. This should have been returned. Some have obtained khadi from the Khadi Association. All these sums have not been returned. This is laxity and means an indirect breach of trust. If we had obtained similar facilities on business terms and failed to repay the sums in time, we would have had to suffer punishment by being sent to prison. We seem to believe, however, that we need not follow business standards in repaying money borrowed from public bodies like the [Provincial] Committee.

Really speaking, the position should be that the money due to the Committee should be regarded as a loan received on one's credit. In English such a debt is known as a debt of honour, or, in other words, money obtained on one's credit as a man of one's word and it is a law among business men, a law of the world, that such debt should be repaid at the earliest opportunity. One should be particularly anxious to repay it. There is another law, too, namely, that the King's tax should be paid before a private debt. This should be the law which one should follow in regard to the money borrowed from the Committee, otherwise the Committees

cannot continue to function. Our laxity may suggest to us many excuses, but none will serve. We deserve no admiration if we refrain from crimes for which the world would punish us; there certainly is no virtue in such conduct. It is no test of our truthfulness. He alone is a man of truth who saves himself from a crime to which God would be the only witness. Innocence consists in voluntarily refraining from a crime for which the world would not punish us. There is no merit in forced charity or one done through fear. Thus, from whatever point of view we look at the matter, our duty is clear, and that is that all those who have received loans from the Committee or other public bodies should wake up, shake off their lethargy and repay the loans without any further delay.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 13-9-1925

99. *OUR DIRTY WAYS–II*

Last week we discussed our dirty ways[1]. The people should give up their habit of defecating at any and every place whether in cities or villages. We should follow the practice of using only fixed places for this purpose. At present we do quite the opposite of this and do not even hesitate to dirty our courtyards or our streets. There is, in consequence, an excess of foul smell and it becomes difficult even to walk. In villages, one should go to the fields which have been fixed for such use or go to one's own fields, and after defecation one should invariably throw dry earth over the faeces. The best way of doing this is to dig a hole with a small shovel or a spade and, after defecation, fill up the hole with the mud so dug up. If, in addition, people follow the practice of marking such spots by fixed signs, everyone would know them. In order to ensure privacy in following this method, a few places should be selected for use.

If people understand this and co-operate in following such a method, the necessary arrangements can be made easily and without expense. Really speaking, such a method would add to the nation's wealth at no cost of labour and bring about improvement in public health. It is the experience of the whole world that the productivity of the field which is used for such purposes increases. If the people welcome this idea, they would actually

[1] *Vide* "Our Dirty Ways", 30-8-1925.

offer to pay for their fields being put to such use. They do that in other countries. In our country, too, in certain parts we see peasants securing a monopoly of removing the night-soil, but they remove it in such a dirty manner that one feels disgusted at the sight of it. If my suggestion is followed, no one would need to remove night-soil, the air would not become polluted and villages would remain very clean.

This is with regard to villages. The same practice cannot be followed in cities. They must have lavatories. It is not necessary to say anything about cities which have Western-style water-closets and where the night-soil is collected through sewers at one place. All that needs to be considered is what people can do on their own. They should voluntarily observe the following rules.

1. Both excretary functions should be performed only at fixed places.

2. To pass urine anywhere in a street, at any place not meant for the purpose should be regarded an offence.

3. After passing urine at any selected place, one should cover up the spot well with dry earth.

4. Lavatories should be kept very clean. Even the part through which the water flows should be kept clean. Our lavatories bring our civilization into discredit, they violate the rules of hygiene.

5. All the night-soil should be removed to fields.

How can we ensure the observance of all these rules? The answer is, through education. Laws are useless so long as people do not understand them and do not recognize their necessity. A law can be passed to compel only a small number of persons. The penalty prescribed by a law which is either not understood or not obeyed by a large number of people serves no useful purpose.

Literacy is not essential for such education. Through magic lanterns and lectures, people should be told about the diseases which spread through filth and about the advantages of saving night-soil for use as manure. Different ways of doing this should be demonstrated.

The best method of education, however, is to show the way through one's own practice. Those who have been convinced of the necessity of putting these suggestions into practice should do so and set an example to others.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-9-1925

100. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, PURULIA[1]

September 13, 1925

Mahatmaji, in reply to the address, said that he was highly pleased to see so many *satis* assembled there. He continued that his religion had taught him to utter the names of *satis* in the morning and thus revere them. Asking all of them to be *pratasmaraniya*[2] like Sita and Damayanti he said that it was only by virtue of their purity of body, soul and deeds that they had become so. In fact, he appealed to the womanhood of India to be as pure as Sita and, until and unless they were so, it was quite impossible to attain swaraj either by the manhood or by the womanhood. To him swaraj was *Ramraj* or *dharamaraj* and that could be obtained only when the women of India had become like Sita. Sita Devi knew no suffering. She entered fire without the least sense of suffering and they too could attain that stage if they had followed in her footsteps.

Mahatmaji next appealed to them to spin and wear khadi. He said that in the time of Sita no woman or, as a matter of fact, no man used to put on foreign cloth. Just as there was a hearth in every house, there was at least one spinning-wheel in it and the female members used to spin. To those who could afford to buy khaddar he appealed to do so, but at the same time they should spin for their suffering brothers and sisters and contribute the yarn to the All-India Khadi Board.

In conclusion he appealed to them to contribute to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund which would be spent for khaddar and village organization according to the last wishes of Deshbandhu.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 15-9-1925

[1] At the meeting, held at 8 a.m., Gandhiji was presented an address of welcome on behalf of the women of Purulia.

[2] Worthy of being remembered in the early morning

101. SPEECH AT MEETING OF UNTOUCHABLES, PURULIA[1]

September 13, 1925

I want to tell those brothers and sisters who have shown by raising their hands that Hindus regard them as untouchables, that I am also a *Dom*. Call me *Bhangi* or *Dom* and I am so. It is my firm conviction that one does not become bad or despised simply because one cleans night-soil. The mother always does so for her child, but society never condemns her as an untouchable. Untouchables are really those who do evil acts, and whose heart is not pure. I therefore want to tell my *Dom* brothers and sisters and others of the untouchable class that they should hate neither Hindus nor their religion. Hindus are trying their best to find out remedies and make amends for the ill-treatment meted out by them to the *Doms* and members of the other untouchable class. There are to be found all over the country Hindus at the present time, who have dedicated their whole time to the cause of ameliorating the condition of the untouchables.

But I have a request to make to the untouchables. I must ask you to eradicate those evils which have crept into your society. During my tour in Bengal, I came in contact with many untouchable brethren, from the United Provinces and Bihar. From them I came to know that they were addicted to the habits of drinking and gambling. It is true that nowadays other Hindus too, even Brahmins, are subject to these vices of drinking and gambling. But let us not imitate the evils in others. I therefore appeal to my *Dom* and other untouchable brothers and sisters that, for God's sake, they should shun the evils in them.

I have also come to know from none else but yourselves that you all are victims of corruption, immorality and untruth as well. You must be able to eradicate these evils also out of yourselves.

You might be acquainted, if you have known Tulsidas's *Ramayana*, with the fact that Ramachandra, Sita and Lakshman had very affectionately embraced the untouchable Guha and I want to see the same repeated once again in India. Let even those who are known as *Chandals*[2] eradicate the evils in them and become the

[1] Before replying to the address in Hindi, Gandhiji had asked those in the audience who were untouchables to raise their hands to enable him to know how many of them were there.

[2] Lowest class of Harijans, removers and eaters of carrion

devotees of Shri Ramachandra. I would also request you to shun the use of foreign clothes and take to the use of hand-woven clothes made of hand-spun yarn. You should bear in mind that, in the days of Shri Ramachandra, neither rich nor poor used any foreign cloth and the khadi produced in the country was in the general use of all.

Further, I would like to tell my other brothers besides the untouchables, who are present here, that untouchability has got no place in the Hindu religion.

My personal belief is strong about it. The moment I am convinced that untouchability is an essential element of Hindu religion, I would immediately renounce my religion. We regard the Shastras and the Vedas as divine revelations. How can then a divine revelation advocate any hatred against members of a particular community? So long as the Hindus continue just to tolerate the untouchables among them and treat them with contempt, the nation would continue to be treated as untouchables by other nations, as is the case today.

And thus also I believe and trust we will not be able to attain swaraj unless we are able to purge the Hindu society of this evil of untouchability. *Ramayana* and Tulsidas have preached the religion of kindness. I would therefore appeal to Hindus of the higher castes present here that, if they call themselves *sanatana-dharmi*[1], if they love the cow, they should not hate the members of untouchable classes.

May God bless you all.

The Searchlight, 20-9-1925

102. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Bhadra Vad 13 [September 15, 1925][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your two letters. I hope you received the wire I sent yesterday. I wish you not to come if it makes Durga unhappy. I shall manage somehow in regard to the Gujarati writing. Dalal has told me that for writing I should use the right hand, a little at any rate. So I shall use it for *Navajivan* at least. The English I shall dictate to Kristodas and Pyarelal. Mr. Sen has sent word that he is not coming.

[1] Followers of the original or orthodox Hinduism

[2] The itinerary in the letter indicates that the letter was written in September 1925.

I hope you have understood what I said about Ramdas in the telegram. Satis Babu is with me. His brother, Hemprabhadevi and Prafulla Ghosh also were with me in Purulia. Urmila Devi and Mona have not come. My programme is as follows:

17 Ranchi
18 Hazaribagh
19 Gaya, and Patna at night
19-24 Patna
I do not know further.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11433

103. SPEECH AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, CHAKRADHARPUR

September 15, 1925

Mahatmaji accompanied by Sjt. Rajendra Prasad and Satis Babu reached Chakradharpur this morning. Addressing the students of the National School Mahatmaji said that the student of the old days used to approach the teacher *samitpani*[1] or with wood in hand, indicating that he had come to be taught and give in exchange his services. The modern system of education has changed this order of things, the result being that the process of giving and receiving education has become a dry one. The students of national schools should give something in return for what they receive today. They are to come to the teacher *sutrapani*—with yarn—or ply the charkha in return for education received. The students should spin and thereby serve the nation in exchange for the education they receive.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 16-9-1925

[1] Offering of forest twigs and wood to the gurukul or ashram was an ancient practice.

104. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, RAMLILA COMMITTEE, ALLAHABAD

RANCHI,
[On or before *September 17, 1925*][1]

REGRET HAVE NO INFLUENCE OVER EITHER SECTION.[2]

GANDHI

The Leader, 20-9-1925

105. NOTES

THE INDIAN HERCULES AND BRAHMINS

I had a visit by appointment on the 8th instant during my brief stay at Sabarmati at 4 o'clock in the morning from the Indian Hercules, as Professor Rama Murti delights to describe himself. He engaged me in an entertaining conversation on the wickedness of modern Brahmins and drew from me questions that seemed to give him full satisfaction, and there seemed to be, for the moment, a kinship between our non-Brahmin souls and a vision was opened out before him of a non-Brahmin war to the knife against the Brahmins who, as he said, after all represented but a microscopic minority.

After our conversation, the athletic Professor seriously concerned himself about my bodily vigour and initiated me into the mysteries of 'healthy mind in healthy body'. He found in me a very willing convert. The exercises which he gave me were delightful but I am inclined to think that they were a trifle too much for one like me who has passed the meridian of life. He claimed for them a superiority over all the European methods, which certificate I heartily endorsed. The exercises were nothing but a few *Hatha Yoga* practices. I commend them to all young men. *Pranayam* has a great health-giving value if practised under skilled supervision. But let there be no self-deception about it. Those who practise these exercises should do so for the purpose of health and that only. They have, no doubt, restricted spiritual value. But I would strongly dissuade young men from going in for

[1] The telegram, according to the source, was received on September 17.

[2] The reference is not clear, but from the context apparently concerned the observance of *Dussehra*, a Hindu festival.

Hatha Yoga practices for spiritual regeneration. In the present age such regeneration comes more from heart-devotion than through physical practices. And for acquiring spiritual merit through *Hatha Yoga* one needs a preceptor who is himself a spiritual adept through these practices. I have searched for such and I have failed. That does not necessarily mean that there are no pure *Hatha Yogis* in India, but where a diligent searcher like me has not succeeded, let young men beware of accepting claimants without severe examination.

But I have gone astray, I must redeem the promise I have made to the Professor when he sent me a digest of our political talk for revision that I would give the substance myself in these columns instead of revising his own reproduction which I received at a time when I had not a moment to spare. He told me that, at Municipal and District-Board elections, my name was being unlawfully exploited by those who described themselves as Congressmen or Swarajists and told me also that on that account I was losing my influence among the masses. I informed him that I was not concerned with my influence and that I could not help if people made an unlawful use of my name. But, retorted the Professor, could I not at least guide the voters by saying what I wanted them to do. I told him that I had done so already on more occasions than one. For me mere Congress label was of no avail. I could only give my vote, if at all, to those who were Congressmen or Swarajists in reality and, therefore, I would give my vote to those who believed in the Congress creed, who habitually wore hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, who believed in unity among all classes and, if Hindus, were active champions of the so-called untouchables and believed that untouchability was an evil to be removed without delay, who were total prohibitionists as to intoxicating drinks and drugs, and who otherwise conformed to the Congress resolutions. If I found no such candidates, I would keep my vote with myself. Not to give the vote is as much an exercise of the privilege of the voter as the giving of it.

The Professor then asked me for my definition of a Brahmin. I told him that a Brahmin was one who sacrificed himself for his religion and his country and who accepted poverty as his happy lot in life for the sake of service. "Are there any such Brahmins?" quickly asked the Professor. "Not many," I answered, "but more, perhaps, than you expect."

Harsh *v.* Pleasant Truth

With reference to my removal of certain passages from a correspondent's letter recently published, he thus complains:

In spite of the expurgation you have thought fit to effect in my letter, I may claim that in all my letters to you, especially where communal questions are involved, I have tried to observe not the 'prudent' maxim, सत्यं ब्रूयात् प्रियं ब्रूयात् न ब्रूयात् सत्यमप्रियम् (which means in brief 'speak not the unpleasant truth') although it be found in most of our received texts of Manu, but the saying of William Lloyd Garrison, the American slave-liberator, which has stood for many years at the head of the *Indian Social Reformer*[1] of Bombay as its motto: I *will be* as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice, etc.

I do not mind harsh truth but I do object to spiced truth. Spicy language is as foreign to truth as hot chillies to a healthy stomach. The passages removed by me were not necessary to elucidate the meaning of the correspondent or give point to it. They were offensive without being useful or necessary. There seems to be the fashion to think that, in order to be truthful, one must use harsh language; whereas truth suffers when it is harshly put. It is like wanting to support strength; truth being itself fully strong is insulted when an attempt is made to support it with harshness. I see no conflict between the Sanskrit text and Garrison's motto quoted by the correspondent. In my opinion, the Sanskrit text means that one should speak the truth in gentle language. One had better not speak it if one cannot do so in a gentle way, meaning thereby that there is not truth in a man who cannot control his tongue. In other words, truth without non-violence is not truth but untruth. Garrison's motto requires to be interpreted in terms of his own life. He was one of the gentlest of men of his time. Mark his language. He will be as harsh as truth, but since truth to be truth is never harsh but always gentle and beneficial, the motto can only mean that Garrison would be as gentle as truth but no more. Both the texts have relation to the inner state of the speaker or writer, not to the effect that will be produced upon those to whom the speech or the writing is addressed. The *Indian Social Reformer* is rarely, if ever, harsh. It tries to be fair though it often jumps to conclusions in a hurry and is obliged later to revise its estimate of men and things. In these days of surrounding bitterness one cannot be too cautious. After all who knows the absolute truth? It is in ordinary affairs of life only a relative term. What is truth to me is not necessarily truth to the rest of my companions. We are all like the blind men who, on examining an elephant, gave different descriptions of the same animal

[1] Weekly edited by K. Natarajan

according to the touch they were able to have of him. And they were all, according to their own lights, in the right. But we know also that they were all in the wrong. Every one of them fell far short of the truth. One cannot be too insistent therefore upon the necessity of guarding oneself against bitterness. Bitterness blurs the vision and to that extent disables one from seeing even the limited truth that the physically blind men in the fable were able to do.

A String of Questions

One of the best of national workers sends me questions for answers. Here they are with answers:

You say we must help the Swaraj Party. What is the meaning of this help?

My meaning is that everyone should help this party to the best of his ability and as far as his conscience will permit. Thus one who is inclined towards the Council programme and has no conscientious objections to it will join the Party. One who has conscientious objections will refrain but, short of joining, give all the other help that he can. He may object to vote also. He will then refrain even from voting. In no case will he vilify the Party.

Should young workers in the villages take part in the election turmoil and canvass for votes for the Swarajists?

I have not conceived that as possible except for Pro-changers. Those village workers who are, for instance, doing khaddar work, and who are not politically inclined will certainly not disturb themselves and their work to the extent contemplated in the question.

The Swarajists will want to capture village boards, municipalities, local boards, etc. What are khadi workers to do?

I expect Swarajists also to be khadi workers. The difference between them and No-changers is that Swarajists add Council work to khadi work. They, therefore, whilst remaining lovers of khadi, give the first place to Council work. No-changers have nothing but khadi and other constructive work to fall back upon. Each may go his own way and each is expected to help the other to the best of his ability and conscience.

What is my position when there are Brahmin and Non-Brahmin candidates,—one set opposing the other?

In such a case, if I were you, I would refrain from interfering except to remove strife and bitterness.

You have said not only should No-changers refrain from opposition to the Swarajists but they should even help them. What is the extent of this help?

I have already answered this question. When there is friendliness, there are many ways of giving help without hindering one's own special work. But each one must determine for himself the extent of help that he is to render. Such help has to be a voluntary offering which cannot be dictated, much less can there be any coercion. There is no question here of party discipline. Mine is the opinion of an individual. The meaning of it can be more fully derived from my own conduct.

Have you decided to help the Swarajists as a matter of necessity, or because you consider that through Councils India will benefit?

There is room for a third reason. I do not consider that Councils will benefit India in the present condition. Nor is it a matter of necessity that I help the Swarajists in my own poor way. I dislike the Council programme but I see that the majority of educated Indians cannot do without the Council programme. The most forward amongst them will gladly retire if they had a fiercely active political propaganda. They cannot be satisfied with the mere constructive programme. It is too slow for them. I recognize the honesty of this attitude. And as one wanting to harness all the forces for the good of the country and realizing that, if one goes to the Councils, one may even there advance the constructive programme and offer dignified opposition to such measures as are detrimental to the welfare of the country, I choose for my help that party which best fulfils my conditions.

KHADDAR WORKERS' CENSUS

The following further figures have been received:[1]

Name of Province or Centre	No. of Workers	Paid or Hon.	Graduates	Total Remuneration	Average Expense per Worker
Sind	6 Full time	5 P; 1 Hon.	..	Rs. 230	38
	3 Part time	2 P; 1 Hon.	1	Rs. 115	38
Punjab Khadi Board	12	No particulars mentioned..			
Delhi	7 Full time	6 P; 1 Hon.	..	Rs. 165	23.5
	9 Part time	All Hon.	..	Nil	Nil.

Young India, 17-9-1925

[1] For the figures, given earlier, *vide* "Khaddar Workers' Census", 27-8-1925.

106. *TO AMERICAN FRIENDS*

It is a privilege for me to enjoy the friendship of so many unknown American and European friends. It pleases me to note that the circle is ever widening, perhaps more especially in America. I had the pleasure of receiving a warm invitation about a year ago to visit that continent. The same invitation has now been repeated with redoubled strength and with the offer to pay all expenses. I was unable then as I am now, to respond to the kind invitation. To accept it is an easy enough task, but I must resist the temptation, for I feel that I can make no effective appeal to the people of that great continent unless I make my position good with the intellectuals of India.

I have not a shadow of doubt about the truth of my fundamental position. But I know that I am unable to carry with me the bulk of educated India. I can therefore gain no effective help for my country from the Americans and Europeans so long as I remain isolated from educated India. I do want to think in terms of the whole world. My patriotism includes the good of mankind in general. Therefore, my service of India includes the service of humanity. But I feel that I should be going out of my orbit if I left it for help from the West. I must be satisfied for the time being with such help as I can get from the West, speaking to it from my smaller Indian platform. If I go to America or to Europe, I must go in my strength, not in my weakness, which I feel today,—the weakness I mean, of my country. For the whole scheme for the liberation of India is based upon the development of internal strength. It is a plan of self-purification. The peoples of the West, therefore, can best help the Indian movement by setting apart specialists to study the inwardness of it. Let the specialists come to India with an open mind and in a spirit of humility as befits a searcher after Truth. Then, perhaps, they will see the reality instead of a glorified edition that, in spite of all my desire to be absolutely truthful, I am likely to present if I went to America. I believe in thought-power more than in the power of the word, whether written or spoken. And if the movement that I seek to represent has vitality in it and has divine blessing upon it, it will permeate the whole world without my physical presence in its different parts. Anyway, at the present moment I see no light before me. I must patiently

plod in India until I see my way clear for going outside the Indian border.

After pressing the invitation, the American friend puts a number of questions for my consideration. I welcome them and gladly take the opportunity of answering them through these columns. He says:

> Whether you decide, now or later, to come here or not to come, I trust you will find the following questions worth considering. They have developed insistently in my mind for a long time.

His first question is:

> Has the time arrived—or is it coming—when your best way to help India will be by moving the whole world—and especially England and America—to a new consciousness?

I have partly answered the question already. In my opinion the time has not yet arrived—it may come any day—for me to go out of India to move the whole world to a new consciousness. The process, however, is even now indirectly and unconsciously going on though slowly.

> Are not the present-day interests of all mankind, everywhere, so inextricably interwoven that no single country, like India, can be moved far out of its present relationships to the others?

I do believe with the writer that no single country can remain in isolation for any length of time. The present plan for securing swaraj is not to attain a position of isolation but one of full self-realization and self-expression for the benefit of all. The present position of bondage and helplessness hurts not only India, not only England, but the whole world.

> Is not your message and method essentially a world gospel—which will find its power in responsive souls, here and there, in many countries, who will thereby, gradually, remake the world?

If I can say so without arrogance and with due humility, my message and methods are indeed in their essentials for the whole world and it gives me keen satisfaction to know that it has already received a wonderful response in the hearts of a large and daily-growing number of men and women of the West.

> If you demonstrate your message in the language only of the East and in terms only of Indian emergencies, is there not grave danger that inessentials will be confused with fundamentals—that some features which correspond only to extreme situations in India will be wrongly understood to be vital in the universal sense?

I am alive to the danger pointed out by the writer, but it seems to be inevitable. I am in the position of a scientist who is in the midst of a very incomplete experiment and who, therefore is unable to forecast large results and larger corollaries in a language capable of being understood. In the experimental stage, therefore, I must run the risk of the experiment being misunderstood as it has been, and probably still is, in many places.

Ought you not to come to America (which in spite of all her faults is perhaps, potentially, the most spiritual of all living peoples) and tell the world what your message means in terms of Western, as well as Eastern, civilization?

People in general will understand my message through its results. The shortest way, therefore, perhaps of making it effectively heard is to let it speak for itself, at any rate for the time being.

For example, should the Western followers of your inspiration preach and practise the spinning-wheel?

It is certainly not necessary for the Western people to preach and practise the spinning-wheel unless they will do so out of sympathy or for discipline or with a view to applying their matchless inventive faculty to making the spinning-wheel a better instrument while retaining its essential characteristic as a cottage industry. But the message of the spinning-wheel is much wider than its circumference. Its message is one of simplicity, service of mankind, living so as not to hurt others, creating an indissoluble bond between the rich and the poor, capital and labour, the prince and the peasant. That larger message is naturally for all.

Is your condemnation of railroads, doctors, hospitals and other features of modern civilization essential and unalterable? Should we not, first, try to develop a spirit great enough to spiritualize the machinery and the organized, scientific and productive powers of modern life?

My condemnation of railroads, etc., whilst true where it stands, has little or no bearing on the present movement which disregards none of the institutions mentioned by the writer. In the present movement, I am neither attacking railroads nor hospitals; but in an ideal State they seem to me to have little or no place. The present movement is just the attempt the writer desires. Yet it is not an attempt to spiritualize the machinery—because that seems to me an impossible task—but to introduce, if it is at all possible, a human or the humane spirit among the men behind the machinery. Organization of machinery for the purpose

of concentrating wealth and power in the hands of a few and for the exploitation of many I hold to be altogether wrong. Much of the organization of machinery of the present age is of that type. The movement of the spinning-wheel is an organized attempt to displace machinery from that state of exclusiveness and exploitation and to place it in its proper state. Under my scheme, therefore, men in charge of machinery will think not of themselves or even of the nation to which they belong but of the whole human race. Thus Lancashire men will cease to use their machinery for exploiting India and other countries but, on the contrary, they will devise means of enabling India to convert in her own villages her cotton into cloth. Nor will Americans under my scheme seek to enrich themselves by exploiting the other races of the earth through their inventive skill.

Is it not possible, in conditions so favourable as America's, to clarify and advance the evolution of the best human consciousness into such purpose and power, courage and beneficence, as shall liberate the souls of India's millions—and of all men everywhere?

It is undoubtedly possible. Indeed, it is my hope that America will seek the evolution of the best human consciousness; but that time is perhaps not yet. Probably it will not be before India has found her own soul. Nothing will please me more than to find America and Europe making the difficult path of India as easy as it is possible for them to do. They can do so by withdrawing the temptations in India's way and by encouraging her in her attempt to revive her ancient industries in her own villages.

Why is it that people like myself, in every country, are grateful to you and eager to follow you? Is it not for two reasons chiefly: first; Because the next [*sic*] and basic need throughout the world is for a new spiritual consciousness—a realization, in the thought and feeling of average people, of the equal divinity of all human beings and the unity, brotherhood, of all; second, because you, more than any other widely known man, have this consciousness—together with the power to arouse it in others?

I can only hope that the writer's estimate is true.

It is a world need—is it not?—to which you have the best answer that God has vouchsafed to man? How can your mission be fulfilled in India alone? If my arm or leg could be vitalized to an extent far beyond the balance of my body, would that make for my general health—or even for the permanent best good of the one favoured member?

I am fully aware that my mission cannot be fulfilled in India alone, but I hope I am humble enough to recognize my limitations and to see that I must keep for the time being, to my

restricted Indian platform till I know the result of the experiment in India itself. As I have already replied, I would like to see India free and strong so that she may offer herself as a willing and pure sacrifice for the betterment of the world. The individual, being pure, sacrifices himself for the family, the latter for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province, the province for the nation, the nation for all.

May I even submit,—with deep reverence for your message—that possibly your own vision and inspiration would benefit by adjustment to the world instead of only, or chiefly, to India?

I recognize the considerable force of the foregoing statement. It is not at all impossible that a visit to the West may give me not a wider outlook—for I have endeavoured to show that it is the widest possible but it may enable me to discover new methods of realizing the outlook. If such is my need, God will open the way for me.

Is the political form of government, in India or anywhere, so important as the average individual's soul-force—his courageous expression of the best inspiration he can derive from the divine spirit within and all about him?

The average individual's soul-force is any day the most important thing, The political form is but a concrete expression of that soul-force. I do not conceive the average individual's soul-force as distinguished and existing apart from the political form of government. Hence I believe that after all a people has the government which it deserves. In other words self-government can only come through self-effort.

Is not the basic need, everywhere, for the clarification and development of this soul-force in individuals—beginning, possibly, with a few people and spreading like a divine contagion to the many?

It is, indeed.

You teach, rightly, that the faithful development of such soul-force in India will assure India's freedom. Will it not everywhere shape all political, economic and international institutions including the issues of Peace or War? Can those forms of human civilization be made radically superior in India to the rest of the world—now, when all mankind are neighbours?

I have already answered this question in the preceding paragraphs. I have claimed in these pages before now that India's freedom must revolutionize the world's outlook upon Peace and War. Her impotence affects the whole of mankind.

You know, better than I or anyone, how all these questions should be answered. I chiefly seek to express my eager faith in your gospel, my hungry desire for your leadership in solving the urgent problems of America and of all mankind. Therefore, will you graciously remember that, if (or when) the time may come that India's progress in the directions you have so inspiringly outlined appears to pause—waiting for the Western world to come up alongside—then we of the West stand urging you to give us a few months of your time and your personal presence. My own feeling is that if you will call us and instruct us, we (your uncounted followers scattered obscurely over the wide earth) will join our lives to yours in the discovery and realization of a new and noble, worldwide Commonwealth of the Spirit in which man's age-old dreams of brotherhood, democracy, peace and soul progress shall characterize the daily life of average people—in India, England, America and everywhere.

I wish I had confidence in my leadership on the world platform. I have no false modesty about me. If I felt the call within, I would not wait a single second but straightway respond to an invitation so cordial as this. But with my limitations of which I am painfully conscious, I feel somehow that my experiment must be restricted to a fragment. What may be true of the fragment is likely to be true of the whole. It is true indeed that India's progress in the direction I desire seems to have come to a pause but I think that it only seems so. The little seed that was sown in 1920 has not perished. It is, I think, taking deep root. Presently it will come out as a stately tree. But if I am labouring under a delusion, I fear that no artificial stimulus that my visit to America may temporarily bring can revive it. I am pining for the assistance of the whole world. I see it coming. The urgent invitation is one of the many signs. But I know that we shall have to deserve it before it comes upon us like a mighty flood, a flood that cleanses and invigorates.

Young India, 17-9-1925

107. AN INSTRUCTIVE TABLE

The following table prepared by the Provincial Congress Committee of Gujarat is a most instructive study:

Figures of the working of the franchise in Gujarat for the half year ended 31st August:

Members originally registered	A 2,215 B 365
Members who have paid full annual quota	266
Members who have paid 6 months' quota	314
Irregular subscribers	1,273
Complete defaulters	727
Total yarn received in yards	15,83,000

Note: The table shows that out of a total of 2,580 members who originally gave in their names only 580 are entitled to vote at the next A.I.C.C. elections.

The irregular subscribers have paid 6,750 thousand yards of yarn in 5,500 yards on an average instead of 12,000 yards that they should have paid.

These figures give one an idea of the work lying in front of us. There is no lack of organization in Gujarat; no lack of khadi workers, but, strange as it may appear, less than one-fourth of the number registered have actually carried out their obligation. The figures need not disappoint any earnest worker who has faith in himself and his cause. But he must not underrate the difficulties in his path. We will not get swaraj without working for it. Congressmen have got into the slovenly habit of making promises and straightway forgetting them, especially when it is a matter of giving any work. In ordinary affairs of life we are made to fulfil the pledges we give. A breach of promise to pay in a commercial transaction carries with it a penalty. A voluntary promise made to a voluntary organization imposes in well-organized societies a stricter obligation on the giver of the promise than a promise made in a commercial transaction. Thus debts of honour have a prior claim for fulfilment than debts enforcible at law. But, somehow or other, Congress debts have not yet acquired any such sanctity as ordinary debts of honour. Those who have no faith in khadi will no doubt argue that the Gujarat figures are an eloquent testimony to the complete failure of the spinning franchise. I should venture to join issue with such

objectors. The spinning franchise has enabled us to lay our finger on the weakest spot. Let it be known that even the four-anna franchise fared no better.

Those who registered their names once did not come the second time to pay of their own accord. And had there been a monthly subscription we would have found almost as many defaulters as we have found among spinners. But pecuniary obligation is a totally different proposition from the obligation to work from day to day. Swaraj is not a pecuniary transaction. It is not to be bought with money. It has to be bought with solid, sustained, vigorous work. And I venture to suggest that we would have noticed the same result, if, instead of spinning, the Congress had imposed the obligation to mend pencils for half an hour every day. The lesson, therefore, that I draw from a study of these figures is that we must preserve along the same lines that we commenced at Belgaum if we are to make the Congress a working, effective and powerful organization. In all probability compulsory spinning will be done away with, but if the Congress retains spinning as an alternative franchise, the effort to make it effective should in no way be relaxed. Out of a population of three hundred millions, we should not have difficulty in finding a few lacs of men and women who would willingly and with unfailing regularity labour for the nation. Spinning is the form chosen because of its great national value and its simplicity. I have not burdened the reader with the detailed working of the franchise in the different districts of Gujarat. The Provincial Congress Committee's report does contain a detailed study. The Committee's organization is so thorough and so honest that, if the strength of the people is properly brought out, their weakness is never suppressed. The detailed study shows that even the five hundred and forty members who are still paying their full quota are not distributed over all Gujarat. But they are drawn from the five spinning organizations, for want of which there would not be even five hundred and forty members remaining. Spinning organizations all over India are therefore a necessity, if voluntary spinning is to be universal.

Young India, 17-9-1925

108. IS THERE SATAN IN HINDUISM?

A correspondent writes:

> A few months back under a heading not quite justified by its contents you published a letter of mine concerning certain religious systems and the belief in God.[1] Now I am tempted to put you a question concerning his adversary (according to Semitic beliefs), whose name you are so often using in your writings and speeches—not of course without effect, as witness the article "Snares of Satan" in your issue of 6-8-'25. If it was only rhetorical effect that was intended thereby, because you were writing or speaking in the language of a people who have been taught to believe in Satan's existence through the Semitic creed of Christianity, then I would have nothing to say. But the article cited, among other things, does seem to point to a belief on your part in Satan's existence, —a belief, in my humble opinion, quite un-Hindu. Asked by Arjuna what was the cause of man's continual fall, Sri Krishna said: "*Kama esha, krodha esha*", etc. ("It is lust, it is anger"—). According to Hindu belief, it would seem, the Tempter is no person outside of us, nor indeed is it *one*; for there are 'the six enemies' of man enumerated in the Shastras: *kama* or lust, *krodha* or anger, *lobha* or greed, *moha* or infatuation, *mada* or pride, and *matsara*, i.e., envy or jealousy. So it is clear, Hinduism has no place for Satan, the Fallen Angel, the Tempter, or as he has been called by a French writer (Anatole France), 'God's man-of-affairs'! How is it then that you who are a Hindu speak and write as if you believed in the real existence of the Old One?

This correspondent[2] is well known to the readers of *Young India*. He is too wide awake not to know the sense in which I could use the word Satan. But I have observed in him a disposition to draw me out on many matters about which there is a likelihood of the slightest misunderstanding or about which a greater elucidation may be considered necessary. In my opinion the beauty of Hinduism lies in its all-embracing inclusiveness. What the divine author of the *Mahabharata* said of his great creation is equally true of Hinduism. What of substance is contained in any other religion is always to be found in Hinduism. And what is not contained in it is insubstantial or unnecessary. I do believe that there is room for Satan in Hinduism. The Biblical conception

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVI, pp. 570-1.

[2] S. D. Nadkarni

is neither new nor original. Satan is not a personality even in the Bible. Or he is as much a personality in the Bible as Ravana or the whole brood of the *Asuras* is in Hinduism. I no more believe in a historical Ravana with ten heads and twenty arms than in a historical Satan. And even as Satan and his companions are fallen angels, so are Ravana and his companions fallen angels or call them gods, if you will. If it be a crime to clothe evil passions and ennobling thoughts in personalities, it is a crime for which perhaps Hinduism is the most responsible. For are not the six passions referred to by my correspondent, and nameless others, embodied in Hinduism? Who or what is Dhritarashtra and his hundred sons? To the end of time imagination, that is, poetry, will play a useful and necessary part in the human evolution. We shall continue to talk of passions as if they were persons. Do they not torment us as much as evil persons? Therefore, as in innumerable other things, in the matter under notice the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life.

Young India, 17-9-1925

109. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, RANCHI[1]

September 17, 1925

In reply Mahatmaji told them that the conviction was daily growing upon him that there was nothing but charkha to feed India's starving millions. There were other occupations, no doubt, for leisure hours, but none was more suited for the millions than charkha-spinning. He had been touring throughout the country but nobody had yet been able to suggest to him another substitute for charkha. Bihar had got one lakh worth of khadi stock and if that was sold, the released money would help in producing double the quantity. It was not difficult for Ranchi alone to buy that khadi. People talked of mill-cloth as swadeshi, but could they substitute Delhi or Bombay biscuits for their home-made bread? Then why should not they use Bihar-made khadi instead of Bombay-made mill-made cloth? If they wanted to clothe their naked mothers and sisters, they must buy khadi. What did comparative dearness of khadi matter when every pice spent went to the poor women in the villages. This charkha had saved the Bombay untouchables. Referring to the problem of untouchability he said that Hinduism knew no untouchabi-

[1] The meeting was held at 3 p.m. on St. Paul's School ground. The gathering was estimated at about 12,000 people. An address of welcome on behalf of the Ranchi public was read. A purse of Rs. 1,001 was also presented to Gandhiji towards the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

lity and this untouchability had made Indians untouchables in the whole world and those who wanted to see the condition of untouchable Indians should go to South Africa and realize what untouchability meant. The late Sjt. Gokhale knew it and Mrs. Naidu had come to know of it. Tulsidas had taught them the religion of kindness (*daya* dharma) but today they were going against it. They must eradicate that problem of untouchability, otherwise swaraj was impossible to attain.

The Searchlight, 20-9-1925

110. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, HAZARIBAGH

September 18, 1925

Mahatmaji replying to the addresses[1] said that he was thankful to them for the addresses they had presented to him, but he was grieved to learn of the two things pointed out in one of the addresses. They stated that recently goodwill [had] prevailed amongst the Hindus and the Mussalmans of the place, but now some misunderstanding had crept in. He was grieved to learn that that was so, but he hoped that leading men of both the communities would join hands and settle the matter. Secondly, they had told him that something similar was passing between the Biharis and the Bengalis too. He could not understand what it was due to. But he knew this much that, if they wanted to free India, if they wanted to gain swaraj for India, they must forget that they were Biharis, Bengalis, Gujaratis or Marwaris, but should bear in mind that they were Indians above all. As provincial men, they should work with the idea that they were preparing their province for the service of the country as a whole. He could not understand how such unpleasantness could enter the societies as this; also, he would say the same thing which he said about the Hindu-Muslim differences. In concluding the speech, Mahatmaji spoke of khaddar and the charkha.

The Searchlight, 20-9-1925

[1] Addresses on behalf of the citizens of Hazaribagh, the District Board and the Municipality were presented to Gandhiji in a beautiful, locally made wooden casket together with a purse of Rs. 1,300.

111. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, HAZARIBAGH[1]

[September 18, 1925][2]

I have nothing set for you. I had no notion when I came here that I would be called upon to address this gathering. I would, however, venture to put before you some stray thoughts on social service. At one of the meetings that I attended at Calcutta, I said that the first necessity for social service was character that, unless a man who aspires after social service has a character, to keep and to lose, he is unfit for that service. Although apparently my life has been a life of political turmoils, all those who at all know me will tell you that it has been predominantly devoted to social service. I am a lover of it and I have very often claimed to be an expert in that line of work—if 30 years' unbroken experience of service can make one an expert.

In my life, I have had the great privilege of a long association not with dozens or even hundreds but of tens of hundreds of men and women, both Indian and European, devoted to social service. In my humble opinion, even political service of the true type is hardly possible without social service, and it was at an early stage of my career as a social servant, whilst I was in South Africa, more so after I returned to India—that I realized the absolute necessity of character for social service. For hard as it was in South Africa to render social service, the difficulties there were nothing compared to the difficulties that confront one in India. Here one has to battle against a tremendous amount of superstition, prejudice and conservatism. Conservatism is a good thing in its own way. It keeps a man clean and on the right path, but when conservatism comes to be allied to ignorance, prejudice and superstition, it becomes most undesirable. Unfortunately, in India, a social worker finds himself confronted by this trinity of evils at the very outset of his career. The field for social service here is abundant and a man or woman who wants to render social service has hardly to think what he or she shall do. There are hundreds of things that await a social servant, they obtrude themselves on his attention if he will only exercise his faculty of observation, so that one may most truthfully say that here more than anywhere

[1] The meeting was held at St. Columba's College.

[2] Date given in *Buddhi Prakash*

else, the harvest is really rich and plentiful but the labourers are few and, it is really amazing that, even after all these long years of education in the colleges of India, we find so few students taking to social service in after-life.

It is true that in social service there is no excitement, no fire-works display. It is all hard, plodding work. It is also true that it has no pecuniary attraction about it; one has got to be satisfied with a bare pittance and sometimes not even that. At present, throughout the length and breadth of the land, there are young men, some of them brilliant graduates, men of sterling character, who are engaged in social service. But some of them have to live upon what may be called starvation wages. But they do not regret it. They have voluntarily abandoned lucrative careers and chosen their thorny but beautiful path of duty and service which is its own reward and satisfaction. The satisfaction which a man feels when he sees his work of alleviating the distress of humanity prospered before him from day to day gives to him a pleasure that is all its own. It gives him a peace of the soul which he cannot get elsewhere. Let us, therefore, explore the various branches of social service and examine their possibilities. We will find as soon as we do that, that there is one fundamental fact which is common to all India and that is its ever-deepening pauperism. It is acknowledged by all. Even those Englishmen who belong to the Civil Service have stated in their evidence that the poverty of India is most distressing and is growing. They have also said that one-tenth of the population of India is living in a state of semi-starvation, getting nothing but stale chupatty and dirty salt. They do not know what milk is. They have never tasted ghee, some of them may have tasted whey. They do not get even oil. You who are studying in colleges and visit the villages only rarely, have you ever thought that within a stone's throw of you in the village there are living men and women whose poverty is most distressing, who hardly get enough to eat. Probably you would not believe me if I told you all the misery that they endure and, even if you believed me, you would not be able to form a mental picture of it. If I were to take you with me throughout my travels, all over the length and breadth of the country, outside the railway's beat, perhaps you would be able to understand what that state of semi-starvation is whose results in degradation and filth and helplessness. I have often met these men in the villages and tried to tell them something about God and I confess to you that I have come back from these talks absolutely humiliated. I said to myself: I have no right to talk to

these men about God before I can give them bread to eat. These people do not know what God is. Their God is their stomach. Look at their faces. There is no lustre in their eyes. You talk to them about work. They smile—nay deride, not smile. They cannot understand why they should work at all. They have lost all hope, they have almost come to regard starvation as their natural condition. Such is their state of utter helplessness. Here among these men then—and they are not few but millions and millions of them—there is almost unlimited field for social service for all of you. In this very district of Chota Nagpur, I learnt that there was a tribe called the Ho, but I did not know all their customs and habits. These men, in this province which should be flowing with milk and honey, which is so nice in its climate and scenary, so rich in mineral resources, I found, are forced to go to Assam to work on tea plantations. I do not mind their working on tea plantations if such be their need but such is not their need. Among these backward tribes there is work enough for all young men. Here you have got a vast field for research and investigation. Wonderful discoveries you will come across in course of your research work—hidden cords underlying the human breast whose presence you little suspected. And when you succeed in touching some of these cords and find that they are responsive to human touch, it will give you all the satisfaction that a man can legitimately desire. I have often told young men that for social service of a universal character they must have one thing. You will laugh when I tell you what that one thing is and say that this old man, whether he talks of politics or social service or alleviating economic distress, cannot help harping upon the charkha. Yes, it is true, I cannot help doing so. This time at Calcutta I was privileged to meet a larger number of people, some of them engaged in missionary work, others in commercial undertakings, and after all these talks, my conviction has grown deeper that social service on a large scale is impossible without a thorough knowledge of the science of the charkha. The disease from which we as a nation are suffering is idleness—enforced at one time, now grown into a habit—and a nation living in idleness does not deserve to live. The middle class people will slave away for their maintenance for eight hours, but a man who slaves away like that for 8 hours is not necessarily industrious. They have no sense of time. I know this to my cost. I have lived in the midst of thousands of labourers in South Africa and, ever with my rickety constitution, I was able to overtake them in their work because they lost so many idle

moments. A friend, who is a Collector, once wrote to me: "I detest your politics,"—meaning non-co-operation about which he had read little, known less—but he loves the charkha. "As an Englishman I do not understand Indian economics," he wrote, "but I like this hobby of yours because by delivering your message of the charkha, you have rendered a great social service." With me it is not a mere hobby—though I should prize it even as a hobby—but a life-giving thing which has revolutionized the lives of thousands of men and women, and if I could carry you educated people with me, if I could make the Englishman agree with me, millions of people should go with a smile on their faces where there is a look of blank despair now. And why? Simply because they have no work and so starve. They feel the pinch of hunger, but they cannot go to the costly works that the Government has opened for them. The work there mostly consists of breaking stones for the roads or carrying metal. And what are the conditions under which this work has to be done. The majority of them are women and they have to work under the supervision of overseers, who have no character to lose or to keep, and who are lustful. The rest you can understand. I would not describe it to you. These women who ought to be as dear to you as your mothers or sisters, if you have any regard for them, have been weaned from this class of labour. The charkha gives them all that they need. An old lady of 60 years walks two miles to obtain slivers from my son and says, "Tell your father he has given me something which is a blessing to me because it has given me a dignity which I did not have before." Today there are millions of such men and women in Champaran to whom the charkha would give independence. The wages of women there are anything between 5 and 6 pice per day, those of boys between 3 and 4 pice and those of men between 8 to 10 pice. The average annual income of an Indian today, I am told, is Rs. 50. I do not know that. But I know that Dadabhai Naoroji calculated it at Rs. 26. The late Lord Curzon, who challenged the accuracy of this figure, set it down at Rs. 33. Even if we accept the late Lord Curzon's figure, including as it does, the crores of the millionaires like the Tatas, as correct, just consider what it would mean to put two to three rupees per month in the pockets of these people. And through what agency? Not the insolent overseers who rob these sisters of their shame and take one rupee as their *dasturi* of the three rupees that they give to them, but by working under the observation of clean lads who will regard their honour as sacred as of their own sisters and

give them money with a smile. It makes all the difference in the world whether you receive 8 or 10 annas from insolent hands or four pice from hands sanctified with work.

That is the dignity of the charkha. There are many other departments of social service. But I have neither the time nor the energy to talk about them to you. If some of you will be fired with the zeal to render this kind of selfless and unassuming social service, you will receive no applause, no Mahatmaship, no pecuniary reward—these, it will not be your privilege to receive. But you will receive instead the blessings of the poor people, a gift greater than riches and treasure—a gift that descends upon you when God says: "Well done, my faithful servant. I am well pleased with thy work." You will, by serving His dumb millions, be able to establish the closest bond of relationship with your Maker. What greater mission can you have? Nothing can be greater. May such be your lot!

The Searchlight, 27-9-1925

112. MY NOTES

Misuse of My Name

It seems a certain business man in Ahmedabad who is trading in tea, puts out many advertisements. And in these my name has been used in such a manner as to give an impression that I have been encouraging his business or, that I approve of the habit of taking tea. I have received four or five letters of complaints on this matter. I do not wish to advertise his tea any further by giving the name and other particulars of the dealer. It is sufficient to state that I have given no certificate to any tea merchant in India for his tea. For many years, I have not taken tea. I do not believe that it is essential for the human body. Tea, if boiled, is harmful. I believe that much harm has been done by people giving up milk because of tea. I do not approve of tea also because the labourers in tea-gardens are subjected to much hardship. Those who get addicted to tea feel nervous when they cannot have it. It is better to give up a thing of this kind which becomes an addiction. For those especially who wish to court imprisonment, it is best to give up tea, as it is not served in prison. It is, therefore, improper to associate my name in any manner with advertisements of tea, and it pains me to see this done. Hence, I would ask those who have been using my name to remove it from their advertisements.

Even otherwise, the story of the misuse of my name is a long one. Men have been killed and falsehood propagated in my name; my name has been misused at the time of elections; cigarettes, to which I am totally opposed, are sold in my name, as also medicines! When the evil is so widespread, what can one do against it?

A British writer has said that cheats prosper where there is a large number of foolish or ignorant people. Is there anyone who has not known the truth of this from his own experience? I have been crying from the house-tops that no one should be deceived by the use of my name. The merits or otherwise of every object must be judged independently. In cases where my certificate is regarded by anyone as essential and there is ground for the slightest suspicion, it is absolutely necessary to refer to me for an explanation.

CENSUS OF "GOSHALAS"

The work of the All-India Cow-protection Association is progressing at a snail's pace, but, let the reader know that it is progressing.

At the last meeting, a resolution was passed to the effect that a census of *goshalas* and *pinjrapoles*, containing certain particulars, should be prepared. Particulars of certain *goshalas* are available but it is necessary that they should be complete. The following details are required for this census.

1. Name.
2. Address.
3. Date of establishment.
4. Number of cattle, under different heads, such as cows, buffaloes, disabled cattle, cattle which do not yield milk, oxen, etc.
5. Description of the land and the building, their area, size, etc.
6. Income and expenditure.
7. Names, and other particulars of the members of the committee. If any bulletins are being issued, a copy should be sent.
8. Does the institution require workers to educate people about its aims?
9. How far removed is the slaughter-house?
10. Is there a cattle market?

Those in charge of *goshalas* and *pinjrapoles* are requested to send a statement giving these particulars to Shri Nagindas Amulakhrai (at Homji Street, Hanuman Building, Fort, Bombay—1).

Chaude Maharaj has undertaken to get through his workers all the details from places which are within their reach. I assume that those in charge of the institutions they visit, will give all possible help.

Report on Gujarat

The report of the Gujarat Provincial Committee, with figures, is published elsewhere in today's issue. These figures teach a great deal and explain many things. I do not feel disappointed by them, but I find that even in Gujarat the spinning franchise has succeeded less than it was hoped. I do not believe that it has failed, for, if the remaining 580 members do their duty, we can get much out of them. Three things, however, become plain from these figures:

1. We attach little value to our provinces.
2. We are not sufficiently hard-working.
3. Something can be achieved only if there are workers.

The spinning franchise was not forced upon us by the Government; the Congress had introduced it after much deliberation. No one was forced, either, to offer their names; people did so voluntarily. Nevertheless, out of 2,580 persons only 580 have stayed on. What does this imply? Does this not mean simply that people do not wish to work? That, further, they attach no value to their words. If anyone says that this is true only with regard to spinning, he is not right. Even when members had to pay their subscriptions in cash, all those who signed did not pay regularly. If we give up the spinning-wheel now and decide on some other form of work, it will meet the same fate. Suppose for a moment that everyone is asked to make as many pens from reeds as they can in half an hour's time, and give them to the Congress as subscription fee, only a few of those who promise to do so will keep their promise. In this laxity lies the cause of the delay in winning swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-9-1925

113. WHAT HAS GUJARAT ACHIEVED?

A non-co-operator expresses his dissatisfaction in the following words:[1]

Knowing as I do the conditions prevailing in the rest of the country, I can see that this dissatisfaction springs from a one-sided view of the matter. It is but natural that the correspondent cannot see this. As he would expect complete success, he would naturally feel dissatisfied with anything less. In my opinion, Gujarat has done more than the other provinces, but the difference is so insignificant that no Gujarati should seek consolation in this fact. No one who wishes to make progress should pride himself on having less to blame himself for than others and be complacent; he should on the contrary, continually examine himself for any shortcomings he may have, feel ashamed of those which he may discover and try to remedy them. If, instead of criticizing others, everyone attended to his own duty this world would be a very much better place to live in.

I, therefore, welcome this letter. We could do much even if we only kept our pledges with regard to khadi. A small but solid achievement yields permanent results. More ambitious work done haphazardly proves short-lived in its results, very often fruitless and sometimes even dangerous. A mason who builds a slanting wall and does not use a T-square may in a short time put up a building which has a beautiful appearance but it will collapse with the very first rains. If there are any people living in it, they too will perish. That mason, however, who patiently and intelligently builds a solid and straight wall with no defects in it, may perhaps take longer to complete it. Nevertheless, the wall he builds will endure so long that, though he may have taken more time, his work will on the whole prove of greater worth than that of the idle, dishonest and ignorant mason. This is true of every kind of work.

But, having known our shortcomings, it is improper to go on lamenting them. We should examine them only in order that we may overcome them. We know what our shortcomings are and there is only one way of remedying them.

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that Gujarat, which was a stronghold of No-changers, had not done all that had been hoped for from it by way of constructive work.

We who know what they are should not lose hope, but should try to get rid of them. Whether or not others take notice, we should silently continue to do our work. Even if in any village there is only one person who is a genuine lover of khadi and spins, he will not lose heart. He will methodically sit down for work and without wavering in his faith, continue to spin. This *yajna*[1], this patience and this *tapascharya* cannot but have their effect on the surrounding atmosphere. All great things have been achieved in this manner. What would have happened if Rama had lost heart at the sight of the army of demons, or if Arjuna[2] had taken to his heels at the very sight of the large army of the Kauravas[3] confronting his own smaller one? What would have been the result if Galileo had lost faith in himself because of fear of public opinion and of bigoted priests? We can look for and collect such instances from all parts of the world. The beginning is always made by one man or woman with determination. If such a person is patient, he or, she either converts the entire world to his or her views, or being humble and honest, sees his or her error, admits it and corrects it.

It is the Lord's assurance that one who strives for the welfare of his soul never suffers an evil fate for his effort. Everyone who makes a sincere effort is a person striving for his welfare. Even the error of such a one does the world no harm. On the other hand, even the kindness done by a person whose intentions are evil or whose mind is disordered proves dangerous.

Knowing this, all Gujaratis who understand their duty should keep up perfect faith and, without thinking about anything else, devote themselves to their work. If they do so, they are bound to serve Gujarat, India and the whole world, for their work is inspired by ill will to none.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 20-9-1925

[1] Sacrifice

[2] Most valiant of the Pandava princes, in the *Mahabharata*

[3] The hundred sons of King Dhritarashtra, in the *Mahabharata*

114. VIOLENCE IN AGRICULTURE

A regular reader of *Navajivan* asks:[1]

It is indeed true that agriculture involves the destruction of countless insects. But another statement, equally true, is that the process of living, even respiration, involves violence of the same kind. But just as by committing suicide one does not completely get rid of the body, so also by refusing to take up agriculture one does not abolish it. A human being is made of earth. His body springs from the earth and derives its sustenance from the various forms which earth takes. Anyone who lives by begging his food in order to avoid the sin that is involved in agriculture commits a twofold sin. He is guilty of the sin involved in agriculture since the food which he begs was produced by the labour of some farmer. He who fills his stomach by begging shares the sin of which that farmer is guilty by virtue of his farming. Secondly, he is guilty of the sin of harbouring ignorance and the indolence which results from it.

If it is desirable for one individual to keep away from agriculture, it is so for all. If too many people live by begging their food, a few poor farmers would be crushed under the burden of supporting beggars. Who would have to answer for this sin, if not the latter? Such essential work as farming is, like bodily functions, a form of violence which cannot be avoided. Such violence does not cease to be violence but, being unavoidable, is less sinful and, through spiritual knowledge and devotion to God, man secures deliverance from such sins and thereby also saves himself from the necessity of violence of this kind. This is why, if man's body is a form of bondage for him, it is also a means of attaining deliverance. Likewise, farming becomes a cause of bondage to anyone who takes it up in order to become rich, but for him who takes it up to earn a livelihood it is a means of attaining deliverance.

No work or activity or profession is blameless. All essential work involves the same degree of evil. Business in pearls or silk and the profession of the goldsmith are far more sinful than agriculture since these are not absolutely essential. They certainly involve much violence. Pearls cannot be obtained without violence. Silk-

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that he was very eager to take up farming, but shrank from it because of the violence which it involved.

worms are boiled. If one could ask the insects that are burnt in the blue flame lighted by the goldsmith and if they could reply, we would get some idea of the violence involved in this profession.

All reverence to that great man who lit the lamp of the dharma of non-violence in this world afflicted with a universal reign of violence.

It is our natural dharma to be careful not to destroy even an ant as we walk. Anyone who walks on proudly, holding his head high and not caring to look below, does not even give a thought to the innumerable insects being crushed under his feet, wilfully commits a sin for which there is no justification and opens the gates of hell for himself. He cannot be compared to the farmers, who should be regarded as relatively innocent. Countless numbers of these latter walk carefully in order to spare the lives of ants and such other insects. There is no pride in them, they are humble. They sustain the world by their toil. Nine-tenths of the world's people are engaged in agriculture, and this is to the good of the world. Agriculture is a necessity and a form of pure sacrifice. Even the most conscientious man can take it up, and anyone who gives up some inessential occupation to take it up earns holy merit.

The correspondent has mentioned the use of goads without thinking about the matter. All farmers do not use goads. Many of them look upon bullocks and other animals as members of their household and treat them with love.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 20-9-1925

115. PRAYING TO GOD

I do not know how to pray and sing devotional hymns and to whom to address the prayer and the hyms, and you constantly advise people to pray. Will you kindly explain how one may do so?

A correspondent has put this question. A devotional hymn is in praise of God, and prayers are a confession of our unworthiness, of our weakness. God has a thousand, which means countless names, or say rather that He has no name. We may sing hymns to Him or pray to Him, using any name which we prefer. Some know Him by the name of Rama, some know Him as Krishna, others call Him Rahim, and yet others call Him God. All these worship the same spiritual Being. However, just as everyone does not like the same food so all these names do not find acceptance with everyone. A person knows God by that name which is fami-

liar to him, and He, who ever dwells in our hearts and is omnipotent, understands our feelings and answers us according to our worthiness.

This is to say that one can pray, sing devotional songs not with the lips but with the heart. That is why even the dumb, the stammerer and the brainless can pray. What avails honey on the tongue when there is poison in the heart? Can a paper rose ever smell sweet? Hence, anyone who wishes sincerely to cultivate devotion to God should purify his heart. Hanuman's[1] strength was boundless because the same Rama who was on his lips was the lord of his heart. It is faith which fills the sails of one's ship, which enables one to lift a mountain or to leap across an ocean. That is, a person can achieve almost anything if the omnipotent God dwells in his heart, be he a leper or a consumptive. Whosoever has God in his heart will have all his diseases destroyed.

How may one attune one's heart in such a manner? This question is not put by the correspondent but is suggested by what I have said above in reply to him. Anyone can teach us to utter certain words, but who can teach us the language of the heart? Only a lover of God can do so. The *Gita* explains, at three places in particular and everywhere generally, what is meant by a devotee. But one does not find such a person simply because one knows his marks or can describe him. It is almost impossible to meet any in this age. I have, therefore, advocated the way of service. God comes unsought, comes because He must, and dwells in the heart of one who serves others. Hence it is that Narsinh Mehta, who had gained knowledge through experience, has sung:

> He is the true *Vaishnava* who understands the sufferings of others.

What class of people suffer? The *Antyajas* and the poor. We should serve them with all means at our command. How can those who regard *Antyajas* as untouchables serve them physically? Those who are indolent, those who take the trouble of plying the spinning-wheel for the sake of the poor and invent all manner of excuses; do not know the meaning of service. Those among the poor who are disabled may be helped with free doles, but feeding those who have their limbs sound without their having to work has the effect of demoralizing them. Anyone who sits before a poor person and spins, persuades him to do the same, serves God in the best possible manner. God has said, "Anyone who offers me a

[1] *Vanara* hero, devoted servant of Rama, in the *Ramayana*

leaf, a flower or some water with devotion serves me."[1] We see it proved again and again that God dwells more often in the homes of the poor. Hence spinning for the sake of the poor is the supreme prayer, the supreme sacrifice, the supreme service.

The correspondent's question can now be answered. We can pray to God by any name. As for the manner of praying one should pray with one's heart, and one can learn to pray in this manner by following the path of service. In this age, those Hindus who serve the *Antyajas* sincerely offer the best prayers. Whoever spins with love for the poor among the Hindus and among Indians of other faiths also follows the path of service and offers prayers from his heart.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 20-9-1925

116. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

PATNA,
Sunday [September 20, 1925][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

You may or may not follow the other rules, you may or may not have [my] address, but do write to me even if you should be sitting on the stake. May this devotion bring you fruit. It is for the same reason that I too am ever desirous of writing to you; but I am only an object of worship. How can I write so long as I do not become a devotee? Many an idol may be falling, whereas innumerable devotees have crossed over. Many attained *moksha* with the help of Krishna's name. But poor Krishna of the *Mahabharata* had to die without glory. For how could he have Krishna's name on his lips? Now tell me who is greater. Is it not the devotee rather than God?

That you would fall ill I certainly knew. I hope you are quite well by now. Yesterday I sent you about 12 columns and I shall try to send you some more today. Without worrying, stay there. Let Durga be completely satisfied. I want you to observe one condition: do not get bed-ridden.

Maulana Shaukat Ali reached here only yesterday. Jawahar[3] and others are arriving today.

[1] *Bhagavad Gita* IX, 26
[2] Gandhiji was in Patna on this date.
[3] Jawaharlal Nehru

I am sending you Urmila Devi's letter just for fun. I had asked Devdas for the *Indian Opinion* file. I have not yet got it.

Keep writing to Rajagopalachari. He is just now both happy and unhappy.

Here they have found the best accommodation for me. It is right on the bank of the Ganges. From where I sit I can see the river flowing before my eyes. I am writing you this letter early in the morning. Indescribable peace prevails. Rajendra Babu who thoroughly tried me yesterday, has compensated for it today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I do not know my tour programme, but today I shall ask them to send it to you.

I see I have destroyed Urmila Devi's letter as is my custom.

I have entrusted Devdhar's case to Perinbehn[1]. Devdhar did not meet me. Vallabhbhai was to decide about Dahyabhai[2]. I shall write to Perinbehn. If Vallabhbhai decides about Dahyabhai, I shall promptly follow it up.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11451

117. SPEECH AT PATNA

September 21, 1925

It is understood that at the informal meeting Mahatma Gandhi was heckled with numerous questions. Some suggested that the spinners should not be Congressmen.

The Mahatma asserted that they were doing the most patriotic work and a spinner must have equal claim on the Congress with the subscriber of money.

Replying to a question whether a professional spinner could be a Congressman, Mahatmaji answered in the negative and said so long as one did not sign the Congress creed one was ineligible to become a member.

As to the question of instituting a political sufferers' fund, Mahatma Gandhi declared that it was most impracticable at the present time.

The Hindustan Times, 23-9-1925

[1] Perinbehn Captain, a congress worker of Bombay, grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji

[2] Son of Vallabhbhai Patel

118. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, PATNA[1]

September 22, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi, in opening the proceedings, observed that a very heavy responsibility rested upon his shoulders because they had to revise one of the most important sections of the Congress constitution. He did not propose to give any ruling on the merits of the question as to whether the A.I.C.C. could revise the constitution, but wanted to leave the ultimate decision on it in the hands of the members themselves. He would give rulings on matters of procedure only. He emphasized the fact that the two questions of revising the franchise and of revoking the Pact[2] entered into last year were very important. It was for them to consider, in a free and frank manner but with calmness, the various difficulties involved in it and settle them, so that in Cawnpore they might be ready to revise their national programme in a manner conducive to the early attainment of swaraj. But if they all thought that the entire question should be left to the Congress to decide, then they should not hesitate to say so. On the contrary, if they thought that they should make the way clear for the Congress, they would say so. First of all, what they had to decide was whether the matter was urgent enough to be taken up and decided by the A.I.C.C. He once more appealed to them to consider the question with a full sense of responsibility.[3]

The Searchlight, 25-9-1925

[1] The afternoon session of the A.I.C.C. was presided over by Gandhiji and attended by about a hundred members.

[2] The Pact entered into between Gandhiji and the Swaraj Party, restricted Congress activity to specified items of the constructive programme and provided that the work in connection with Central and Provincial legislatures be carried on by the Swaraj Party as an integral part of the Congress. *Vide* Vol. XXV, pp. 288-9.

[3] In the discussion that followed, R. K. Sidhwa (Sind) objected that the A.I.C.C. was not competent to initiate any change in the constitution which only the Congress could do. Motilal Nehru held that the A.I.C.C. possessed competence. S. Srinivasa Iyengar believed that nothing was sacrosanct and they should favour a change for better conditions in the country. J. M. Sen Gupta complained that the existing franchise prevented functioning, while Madan Mohan Malaviya wanted elections on the basis of a new franchise. On Gandhiji's putting the resolution to vote 93 supported a change in the constitution while 7 opposed it. Motilal Nehru then moved the "New Franchise" resolution.

119. SPEECH AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, PATNA[1]

September 22, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi said that they must vote unfettered by any consideration for himself or for his opinions. If they did not want the yarn franchise, they might reject it altogether. They might with equal freedom reject the suggested use of khaddar if they did not want it. He wanted them to vote with the full comprehension of the implications of the clause relating to the proposed Spinners' Association. They must remember that the new Association would not be controlled by the Congress. But it would use the prestige of the Congress and help the Congress. There was a view that the All-India Spinners' Association should have a separate existence and should try to create a prestige for itself. The All-India Khadi Board and its funds were the properties of the Congress. They might say that they did not want to part with the properties of the All-India Khadi Board in favour of the Association. They were fully entitled to say that. But the All-India Spinners' Association was intended to be an active body. There was nothing [dubious] behind the creation of the All-India Spinners' Association. It was intended to be a purely commercial body to look after the economic side of khaddar. Proceeding, Mahatmaji said that he knew very well that khaddar by itself had no capacity to bring about an atmosphere for civil disobedience. It was for them to make it so and some of them felt that it was possible for them to do so. Those who believed in civil disobedience wanted some evolution of power, in India, something as a cohesive force. And therein lay the political significance of khaddar. The All-India Spinners' Association would invite Englishmen to be its members; it would invite Sir Ali Imam to become its member if he agreed to put on khaddar; it would invite the Maharaja of Bikaner to be its member if he patronized khaddar. The All-India Spinners' Association thus would have the means and would have the strength to boycott foreign cloth which, to their utter shame, they must confess, they had not done so far.

If they wanted willingly to part with the All-India Khadi Board funds they might do so. But the Congress would not shape the policy of the Spinners' Association. It would not have the same franchise as the Congress. But it would only act as the agency of the Congress at its pleasure. In reply to a question as to who will form the Spinners' Association, Mahatmaji said:

I am going to form the Spinners' Association. It will be a very small association. I have not fixed the number [of members]

[1] Gandhiji intervened in the debate on the Constitution Amendment Resolution.

as yet. But the Congress could not bind the policy of that Association.

Mahatmaji said he had received a large number of amendments, but instead of putting each one of them successively he would take up the main principles covered by the amendments and take the sense of the House on them.

The first item that Mahatmaji proceeded to take vote on was whether they wanted spinning as an alternative franchise.

Only five voted against and the alternative spinning franchise was carried by an overwhelming majority.

Mahatma Gandhi pointed out that All-India Khadi Board was faced with tremendous difficulties. They were only changing the name of the Khadi Board by founding the new organization—which he was founding only to give a permanent footing to khaddar work. The All-India Khadi Board had well-nigh exhausted its funds and they would be removing the present obstacles in the way of the Khadi Board by giving it the new orientation he was proposing. As long as the Congress believed in khaddar, they could not but see that the proposed Association would be an invaluable asset to it.

Mahatmaji again explained the resolution and put Pandit Malaviya's amendment to vote. The result of voting this time was as follows: For habitual wear of khaddar—36; against 51. Habitual wear of khaddar was lost this time.

Babu Rajendra Prasad wanted to know from Mahatmaji, if he and his friends were in honour bound to vote for the proviso.

Mahatma Gandhi said there was no question of honour involved in it. The Pact was between Pandit Motilal Nehru on behalf of the Swaraj Party and himself and those who had any conscientious objection were at liberty to vote as they thought proper. He might be doing unintentionally a disservice to the Congress and the country, but he for himself thought that the Congress could not do better than support the Swaraj Party in the ensuing elections. The No-changers ought to surrender the Congress to them and make it a political organization for all purposes. He himself had not contributed a single pie to the Swaraj Party nor did he intend to pay one, because whatever he got, he would prefer to spend on the charkha and khaddar as he considered them to be above everything else. All the same, the Swarajists had, no doubt, his moral support. But no one on that account should vote for the resolution if he honestly felt otherwise about it. He wanted everybody to vote freely. There was no point of honour involved in it. Some people were of the opinion that some evil genius had possessed him at the present moment and that he was selling himself to the Swaraj Party. He honestly felt that they should surrender to the Swaraj Party. But it was their duty to resist him if they felt otherwise.

Put to the vote 61 voted for the proviso and 22 against it. The proviso was therefore retained as it was.

The whole of the resolution was then put to the vote with following result: Part A—Carried unanimously. Part B—For 74: Against 12. The meeting adjourned till the day following.

The Searchlight, 25-9-1925

120. *SPEECH AT KHILAFAT CONFERENCE, PATNA*[1]

September 22, 1925

After the recitation of an *ayat* from the holy Koran and an opening song, Mahatma Gandhi was the first to address the gathering. He said that when he was invited to attend the Conference, he had told the Secretary not to ask him to make any speech there. But he was told that some ladies were also expected to attend the Conference and that he should tell them something about khaddar and charkha. That was certainly a source of great temptation to him to speak to them on khaddar and that was why he had immediately agreed to do so.

People were heard saying that the Gandhi of 1921, who always spoke to them about the Hindu-Muslim unity then, did not do so now, but that the moment he was asked to speak on khaddar and charkha he immediately consented to do so. The question was a very pertinent one and he was ready with his reply. He had told them so many times, both in his speeches and in his writings in the Press, that he had now lost his hold on both the Hindus and the Mussalmans. Today neither of the communities listened to him nor was ready to act up to his advice as was the case in 1921. And he claimed the same was the case with the Ali Brothers as well. They too had lost their hold on both the communities. Under the circumstances nothing was left to him but to pray and pray to God. Why should he go and speak to one who was not ready to listen to him? That was why he preferred to remain silent on the subject. In other matters as well, in respect of the matter of attaining freedom for the country, he had lost his hold on the educated people of the country. But he had trust in both of them. Even today he was for non-co-operation. That was his creed yet, as was Hindu-Muslim unity. But he did not find that unity existing today. That was why he was silent about it, and preferred to speak to them once again about khaddar, of which he

[1] The Patna District Khilafat Conference commenced its sittings in the Anjuman Islamia Hall at 7 p.m. Among those present were Shaukat Ali, Abul Kalam Azad, Mahomed Ali, Zafar Ali Khan, Shafi and Rejendra Prasad.

had already spoken so many times, khaddar was vital both to the Hindu and the Mussalman who regarded India as his own.

They would have to realize that it was a sin both for the Mussalmans and for the Hindus to put on anything but khaddar, made of the yarn spun by the poor in the villages. Let Hindus and Mussalmans fight one another and fight to their heart's content. Let them break each other's heads and let there flow a stream of blood out of it. But let not the Government interfere with it. And despite all this, let not the Indians persist in saying that even in their degradation, they would use the cloth made in Manchester, Lancashire or Japan or even made in the mills at Bombay. He reprobated the use even of the latter in comparison with khaddar. They knew very well that in India millions of both the Hindus and the Mussalmans in the villages knew not what was called two meals a day. The speaker had seen the miserable condition of such people in the villages in Bengal during his recent tour in that province. And if they also saw with his eyes, their eyes would, no doubt, be at once filled with tears. In villages near about Atrai, 90 per cent of the people were Mohammedans and in that very area Babu Satis Chandra Das Gupta had been carrying on his khaddar work under Dr. P. C. Ray, as a result of which, if the women in that area were able to earn even two and a half rupees a month, they were immensely pleased. Those who were well-off might laugh at it and not be able to realize the value of it. But it was no doubt of considerable value to those families whose entire income from agriculture amounted to but seven rupees a month. The constables and the orderlies in the employ of the Government would readily be able to realize the value of it. If these people got an increase of even one rupee, how immensely pleased they were and grateful they felt to the officers concerned. Concluding, Mahatmaji eloquently appealed to the people in the name of the millions of starving people in the villages to take to khaddar and the charkha. Let them, for the sake of these poor people, spin and give their yarn to him so that he might be able to cheapen the cost of khaddar, mainly for these starving millions and ultimately for all. He had heard a Mussalman saying that Mahatmaji must have gone mad to expect that the Mussalmans would at all take to khaddar. The Mussalmans of the United Provinces wanted fine cloth like nainsook, *malmal*, etc., for their use. The rough and coarse khaddar was not to their taste. But he did not agree with them. The Mussalmans also were born in and belonged to India. They also had the sense of humanity in them and they also felt for these starving millions in the villages. He hoped they would also take to khaddar as, in fact, many of them had already done. They would be serving two purposes thereby. They would get cloth for themselves as well as help the starving millions in the villages. For God's sake and for the sake of the starving poor of the country, let them all, today and, if possible, at that very moment, take to the charkha and spinning.

The Searchlight, 23-9-1925

121. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[Before *September 23, 1925*][1]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I wrote to you on the train. You must have received the letter. It seems sickness has visited everyone there. Let me know how all of them are doing.

I believe Nimu[2] is not yet old enough to be bothered with the question of when she would like to marry. I personally would wish that we wait for two years. If Ramdas is willing to wait, I will insist on waiting. I am thinking of Nimu's interest only. After marriage she is sure to live with Ramdas, and I shudder at the thought of her becoming pregnant, which would be but a natural consequence. Nimu is by no means fit to carry the burden of a child. I have agreed to this engagement out of consideration for you and Ramdas. Had Ramdas not been agreeable, I would have opposed your wish. I gather from Jamnadas that they were on the point of selling off Nimu. I would not then have held myself responsible for it. In the present case the responsibility lies on your head and mine.

Get Nimu engaged after telling her that I would like her to wait for two years for the marriage. Whatever religious ceremony is necessary for the engagement should be done at Amreli. If she wants the marriage to be celebrated at Lakhtar I will not oppose it, but will try to dissuade her. I shall take part in the marriage as a religious rite only. Ramdas too is of the same opinion. If Ba objects, put her at ease. I have already written to her. Now you may do as you think best. If Nimu happens to grow very fast, I will not insist next year on waiting further. I hope she does not grow that fast. May God help her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 7744. Courtesy: Chhaganlal Gandhi

[1] The letter was received by the addressee on 23-9-1925.

[2] A niece of the addressee

122. BIHAR NOTES

The tour in Bihar commenced with my attending the Bihar Provincial Conference at Purulia. The chief business of the Conference was to pass a recommendatory resolution endorsing the proposed change in the spinning franchise. The presidential speech was delivered in English. I wish Moulvi Zubair had delivered it in Hindustani. I know that half the audience did not understand this otherwise admirable speech. There was, too, the Hindu Sabha and the next day the Khilafat Conference in the same *pandal*. It was a most pleasing thing for me to find all the presidents respecting my wish not to speak at any of the conferences. I have grown weary of speaking. I have nothing new to say. I travel because I fancy that the masses want to meet me. I certainly want to meet them. I deliver my simple message to them in a few words and they and I are satisfied. It penetrates the mass mind slowly but surely.

Annexed to the Conference was a well-arranged Industrial Exhibition. You saw there the undoubted evolution of khaddar. There was the spinning competition and the distribution of prizes. Osman of the Khadi Pratishthan carried the first prize which consisted of a gold medal. A little girl six years old was also a prize-winner. Her spinning was not bad at all. She carried the prize in that she was only six years and yet could steadily spin for the competition. The lantern-slide lecture on khaddar, which Khitish Babu of the Khadi Pratishthan delivered to an appreciative audience, was another feature.

The usual addresses and purse were there. The purse was intended for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. There were collections, too, on the spot both at men's and women's meetings. The collection at the latter was as usual larger.

I was taken too to a village called Golunda, a co-operative centre where spinning is being tried. It is an interesting experiment and, if it is carried out scientifically, it is bound to succeed and yield startling results.

Purulia has an old Leper Asylum managed entirely by the London Missionary Society. I saw the first Leper Asylum at Cuttack. But there it was a hurried visit. I was able only to see the lepers and the Superintendent. I had no time to see the appointments. At Purulia I was able to see the quarters and understand the working of the institution. In both the places the Superinten-

dents and their wives have become devoted friends of the lepers. There was no unhappiness on the faces of the inmates. They were able to forget their distress through the loving care of their Superintendents. I was told at Purulia that leprosy was brought under subjection by means of oil injections, especially in the initial stages. The Superintendent also told me that the cases that looked horrible—burnt-up skin or burnt toes and fingers—were not contagious at all. In such cases the disease had done its work. There was no contagion and no cure. The contagious cases were those which neither the public nor the patient recognized as such. These are the cases that admit of complete cure through injections. It is a matter of humiliation for us that the very necessary and humane work of looking after this portion of distressed humanity should be taken up solely by Christian foreigners. All honour to them, but what of us? The reader will be sorry to learn that leprosy is on the increase. The general reason assigned was unchaste living and wrong dieting.

Unlike other parts of Bihar, Purulia and the surrounding country is a predominantly Bengali-speaking tract. It has a comparatively better and cooler climate than Calcutta. The Bengalis use Purulia as a health resort. Deshbandhu's father built a beautiful home in Purulia. I was put up in this house. I felt sad having to be in Deshbandhu's house when he was no more. His father's and his mother's *samadhis* were in this house. They lie in a corner. A simple unpretentious stone platform marks the spot where their ashes lie buried. Yonder was a dilapidated building which was built by one of Deshbandhu's sisters which she was conducting as a Widows' Home. With her premature death the Home died a natural death. Yet another dilapidated building was pointed out to me as a block of rooms which were built for housing poor people. The whole surroundings seemed to be in keeping with the mystic charity of this family of philanthropists. It was therefore a privilege for me to be asked to unveil Deshbandhu's portraits and uncover two plates directing the stranger to a Deshbandhu Avenue and a Deshbandhu Road.

I must deal with my entry into the territories inhabited by the Hos, the Mundas and the other aboriginal tribes among whom a silent reform movement is going on.

Young India, 24-9-1925

123. UNTOUCHABILITY AND GOVERNMENT

A correspondent writes:[1]

Here there is evidently a confusion of thought, I know all about the manufactured addresses by Untouchables during the visit of the Prince of Wales. And whilst I know nothing about the British Government being at the back of the movement referred to by the correspondent I should not be at all surprised to find that the charge is well founded. The tendency of the Government is undoubtedly to divide us. Its strength lies in our divisions. Our unity will dissolve it. But such a policy of the Government is no proof of its interference with our work for untouchables. The Government, for instance, does not directly or indirectly obstruct us in removing untouchability, conducting schools for untouchables, digging wells for them or sharing our own with them. Reform on the part of the Hindus is a totally different thing from the exploitation of the untouchables. Indeed, that exploitation is a certainty if we obstinately refuse to do our duty and purge Hinduism of the curse. And we shall not be able to exert ourselves to the utmost in this direction if we put the blame on the shoulders of the Government and thus wait for the removal of untouchability till swaraj is attained.

Young India, 24-9-1925

[1] The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent referred to Gandhiji's remark in *Young India* of 27-8-1925 that he did not know of "a single instance where the Government have obstructed the public in its programme of removing untouchability". The correspondent held that "the Government, if not actually hindering the reform, has been certainly trying to pervert it." He cited instances of the "addresses of welcome" by chamars of Meerut manoeuvred by the Government at the time of the visit of the Prince of Wales, and of a "Adi-Hindu Andolan" or movement in Manipuri, Itawah, Etah and Kanpur districts instigating the untouchables to demand separate representation and fair proportion in the services and to rise in revolt against caste Hindus. In the correspondent's opinion, "it was an open secret that the authorities are at the back of this movement."

Here is a letter all the way from California:

> Enclosed please find a small cutting. Read this cutting first:
>
> "Kennedy was seated in the ranch house and happened to glance into the yard where his four-year-old grand-daughter was playing. He saw a mountain lion stealthily creeping upon her. Kennedy rushed for his rifle and fired through the window at the lion as it was ready to spring. The bullet pierced its heart."
>
> Now give your opinion regarding the method used by the child's father. Please answer the following questions:
>
> "Was he justified to kill the lion? Should the father remain non-violent and let the lion devour his child? Should the father appeal to the soul of the lion and thus endanger the life of his child? Was it possible for the father to plead mercy in order to save the child? Are you going to keep on appealing to the soul of the British lion and let them devour the lives of many million Indians?"

My answer to his first question is that the father was justified in killing the lion. In asking the other questions the correspondent has betrayed his ignorance of non-violence and its working. Non-violence is not so much a mental or intellectual attitude as a quality of the heart, the soul. If Kennedy had no fear of the lion—fearlessness being the first and indispensable condition of non-violence—if he had a heart-recognition of the fact that the lion possessed a soul as much as he himself did, instead of rushing to his rifle and relying upon the problematical chance of the lion waiting till he reached his rifle and of taking an unerring aim, he should have rushed to the lion and put his arms round him in the fullest confidence of being able to appeal to the soul within him and rescuing his child. That such non-violence is reached by the fewest possible is only too true, and therefore mankind in general will always kill lions and tigers in order to save their children and cattle. But the fundamental position remains unaffected. The phenomenon of real sadhus fearlessly meeting and remaining unharmed without harming the wild beasts of the jungle is not an unknown thing in Hindustan. We have a historical record of such instances in the West also. The writer has further committed the error of imagining an unimaginable case with brave men. If Kennedy had remained a passive spectator of his child being devoured, the case would have been one not of

non-violence in any shape or form but of rank and heartless cowardice, the very opposite of non-violence. The last question put by the correspondent is really what his letter is intended to lead up to. In it the correspondent has shown woeful ignorance of the history of our own times. He must know that the movement for which I have made myself responsible is not an appeal of the kind he imagines to the soul of the British lion, but it is an appeal to the soul of India to find itself. It is a movement to develop internal strength. In its final form, therefore, it is undoubtedly an appeal to the soul of the British lion. But it then becomes an appeal from an equal to an equal, not an appeal of a beggar to a possible donor, or the vain appeal of a dwarf to a giant to save him. It will then be an irresistible appeal of soul to soul. In the process of development of internal strength, the inevitable devouring will no doubt go on. But it will not cease even when and if India rushes like Kennedy to the rifle. But whereas Kennedy tried to reach the rifle which he possessed and whose use he knew, the Indian Kennedy unlike the Californian would be trying to destroy the British lion without possessing the necessary weapon or the skill to use it. Under my method, there is the present possibility not of destroying the British lion but of changing his nature. Again, under the Kennedy method India will have to develop the same qualities which we at present deplore in the British lion. Lastly, the third course which evidently the correspondent imagines to be not merely possible but the alternative to his method does not arise at all in the case of India, as it did not in the Californian case. India to be free has only two choices. She must either become, for the purpose of achieving her freedom and to that extent only, non-violent, or must endeavour to develop the Western methods of violence with all its implications.

Young India, 24-9-1925

125. NATIONAL ARBITRATION?

I am supposed to be Chairman of the National Arbitration Board appointed at Delhi last year regarding communal disputes. I had wires and letters seeking my intervention at Delhi, then at Panipat and now at Allahabad. I was regretfully obliged to advise these parties that I claimed no longer to exercise influence over the respective communities. An arbitration is useful when the board of arbitration has influence over the disputing parties and when they are ready to abide by their award. Times have changed since the Delhi meeting. Parties are just now better organized for quarrels than for settlement. No doubt they will finally meet. But it seems that they will do so only after they have finished with the arbitrament of the sword. I think I know my limitations and believe that I shall serve the cause of peace by remaining away from all intervention in communal disputes.

Young India, 24-9-1925

126. NOTES

Misuse of My Name

A correspondent from Madras has addressed to me a printed open letter describing what are in his opinion the many misdeeds of the Swarajists in Tamilnad and drawing my attention to the uses to which my name has been put in connection with municipal elections. Here are some samples:[1]

If the foregoing is a correct picture, it is certainly deplorable. The correspondent asks me to dissociate myself from such methods. His suggestion either means that he does not know me, for I have more than once expressed my strongest disapproval of untruth and violence including rowdyism. I have even done penance more than once for an illegitimate use of my name when there was even the remotest chance of my position being misunderstood. It is impossible for me, however, to hold myself responsible for the acts of those who will do evil deeds in my name without the slightest warrant for it; or the suggestion of the correspondent means that if

[1] Not reproduced here. The letter cited breach of promise, bribery, corruption, misuse and exploitation of Gandhiji's name, misrepresentation to voters or tipping them with wine, etc.

what he has related is true, I should cease to help the Swaraj Party. I cannot do it so long as men like Pandit Motilalji guide its deliberations, and so long as its creed remains what it is. My general help to the Swaraj Party does not mean endorsement of every method adopted in the name of the Party, or of the acts of individual Swarajists. I have no doubt that there are loafers and humbugs in the Swaraj Party, but I am sorry to have to confess that I have not yet belonged to a single democratic institution which has been able to keep itself clear of such types of humanity. The utmost that a man can do to keep himself clean is to examine the creed of institutions and the general character of those who run them, and to sever his connection when the creed itself becomes questionable, or an institution though safe as to its creed passes into the hands of men proved to be unscrupulous. If bad men have crept into the Swaraj Party it can also claim many able, honest, self-sacrificing and hard-working men. It will not suffer in comparison with the other parties. The correspondent may rest assured that no amount of encouragement from me of any party can possibly save it from extinction if the adoption of methods such as he describes becomes general. The question, therefore, for the correspondent, the public and me is to find out how far the methods described are adopted and countenanced by the Swaraj Party. My duty in this direction is discharged by publishing the digest of such charges and expressing my disapproval of crooked methods even for gaining a laudable end. The probability is that the charges brought by the correspondent will be refuted by those against whom they are levelled. I am chary of believing them because experience has taught me that where party spirit runs high unfounded accusations are made by opponents one against the other. Even my mahatmaship has not rendered me immune from charges which I know to be untrue. Recently I was charged whilst at Calcutta with prevarication and with gross inconsistency. Many of the Punjab patriots during the Rowlatt Act agitation were charged with wickednesses of which they were absolutely innocent. I do not know a single public man who has not been under the shadow of suspicion at some stage or other of his public life. There is reason to be cautious, therefore, in blieving charges against parties or party leaders.

True Satyagraha

For a long time I have purposely refrained from writing anything in these columns about Vaikom and its struggle against

unapproachability.[1] Nor do I want as yet to say anything directly bearing on it. But I do want to tell the reader how the satyagrahis at Vaikom are passing their time.

A letter was received at Calcutta from Vaikom dated the 1st of August. It has remained unpublished through oversight. But the substance of it is as fresh today as it was when it was received. I reproduce it below:

> Now there are only ten volunteers including myself. One of us daily does the kitchen work while others except one offer satyagraha for three hours each. Including the time taken to go and return, the time for satyagraha comes to four hours. We regularly get up at 4.30 a.m. and prayer takes half an hour. From 5 to 6 we have sweeping, drawing water and cleaning vessels. By seven all of us except two (who go for satyagraha at 5.45 after bath) return after bath and spin or card till it is time for going to the barricade. Most of us regularly give 1,000 yards each per day and some of us even more. The average output is over 10,000 yards per day. I do not insist on our doing any work on Sundays when each does according to his will. Some of us card and spin for two or three hours on Sundays too. Anyhow no yarn is returned on Sundays. Those who are Congress members spin for the Congress franchise on Sundays. Some of us are now spinning on Sundays and other spare hours for our humble gift towards All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund which you have instituted. We wish to pack a small bundle of yarn to you on the 4th September (G. O. M. Centenary Day). I hope you will be glad to receive it. This we shall spin apart from our routine work. We mean either to beg or to spin the whole of that auspicious day and to send whatever is obtained. We have not yet settled what we should do.

This shows that the satyagrahis of Vaikom have understood the spirit of their work. There is no bluster, there is no fireworks display; but there is here a simple determination to conquer by exact conduct. A satyagrahi should be able to give a good account of every minute at his disposal. This the Vaikom satyagrahis are doing. The reader cannot fail to notice the honesty in spinning Congress yarn, and the yarn for the G.O.M. Centenary during their off-day. The idea too of spinning for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial is in keeping with the rest of their doings. The letter before me gives me details of each member's spinning during the preceding week omitting Sunday. The largest quantity spun by a single inmate is 6,895 yards of 17 counts. The lowest is 2,936 yards of 18 counts. The remark

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXIII and XXVII.

against his name is that he was absent on leave for three days. The average per man per day during that week was 866.6 yards. I have also before me the figures for the week ending 26th August. The highest during that week was 7,700 for a single individual, and the lowest was 2,000, the spinner having spun only two days during the week. The reader may ask what connection is there between the removal of untouchability and spinning. Apparently nothing. In reality much. It is not any single isolated act which can be called satyagraha apart from the spirit behind. Here, there is spirit behind the spinning which is bound to tell in the long run; for spinning to these young men is a sacrificial national act calculated unconsciously to exhibit true humility, patience and pertinacity—qualities indispensable for clean success.

Compulsory Military Training

An Allahabad Graduate writes:

I am a registered graduate of the Allahabad University. I am entitled to vote for a candidate seeking election to the Allahabad University Court.

Exception has been taken to my opposition to making military training compulsory in the universities. On this point I seek your opinion through the columns of *Young India*. My view briefly is this:

I admit that under a swaraj government our young men would be required to take to the Army as a career and we shall have to encourage that spirit. But under an alien government I feel there is absolutely no security that these university corps would not be used against the Indian nation, as the Indian army has been used in the past. Moreover would it not be adding another link to the chain of moral slavery if our young men are *compelled* to take up military training? Does it not clash with the ideal of a university, where at least we can expect a free atmosphere for growth? Would it not cast our ideals in a militarist mould? My information about foreign universities is limited, but so far as I could gather I understand there is no compulsion even in universities of free countries like England and America. Even if we ignore political considerations should we not allow the individual his freedom of conscience to preserve which large numbers of Englishmen went to jail during the War. All of them were not afraid to die.

These are considerations which deserve fullest attention. On the other hand compulsion in physical training I would gladly support—as a matter of fact, I advocate. I feel that if it is made compulsory all the requirements of a university would be met.

We should not shut the doors of the University against those who hold different views on life or politics. There is already too much of cramping in these institutions.

As a pacifist by religion I heartily endorse all that my correspondent says about compulsory military training in the universities. But the argument seems to be sound even from the purely utilitarian and national standpoint. Not only can there be no security against the use being made of university corps for purposes antagonistic to the national interest, but whilst the Government retains its anti-national character there is every likelihood of these corps being used against the nation on due occasions. What, for instance, could prevent a future Dyer from using these university men for enacting another Jallianwala Bagh? May not young men themselves offer their services for an expedition against the innocent Chinese, or the equally innocent Tibetans when their subjection is felt necessary in the interests of imperial commerce? Some of the young volunteers who served during the War justified their action by saying that thereby they gained experience in the art of war, just the reason which consciously or unconsciously prompted some of the Frontier expeditions. Those who run empires successfully have an instinctive knowledge of human nature. It is not deliberately bad or wicked. It acts excellently under a high impulse. And thousands of young men who, before they join any corps, must take the oath of allegiance and must on scores of occasions salute the Union Jack, will naturally want to give a good account of their loyalty and willingly shoot down their fellow men upon receiving from their superiors orders to fire. Whilst, therefore, even as an out-and-out believer in ahimsa, I can understand and appreciate military training for those who believe in the necessity of the use of arms on given occasions, I am unable to advocate the military training under the Government of the youth of the country so long as it remains utterly irresponsive to the needs of the people, and I should be against compulsory military training in every case and even under a national government. Those who do not wish to take military training should not be debarred from joining public universities. Physical culture stands on a different basis altogether. It can be and should be part of any sound educational scheme even as many other subjects are.

Plight of Mill-hands

A letter from Calcutta gives me the following figures about, and description of, its mill-hands:[1]

[1] Not reproduced here. The report showed a total of 6,62,000 mill-hands, complained of their being illiterate, addicted to vice, and prone to run into debt, and asked if there was no way to save them.

I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the figures or the description, but both may be safely taken as generally correct. The writer of the letter says that Deshbandhu had promised "to relieve them of their sufferings," and asks me to complete the work that death prevented Deshbandhu from even beginning. He then suggests that I should find a capital of ten thousand rupees for helping a cinema company worker so that he may give exhibitions in the mill areas and that looms and charkhas may be established in their midst.

The writer is well-meaning but it is clear that he does not know that the cinema will not make the men and women literate or wean them from the vices he mentions. He does not know also that these labourers are not likely to take to the looms or the spinning-wheels as a supplementary occupation for they do not need it; they may learn spinning and weaving to help them in hartals or when they are out of employment. Moral and social reform among the labourers is most difficult and taxing. It is slow work and can only be done at the hands of reformers who will live practically in their midst and by their sterling character affect the lives of the mill-hands for the better. Such work requires no capital and whatever is required will be gladly paid for by the mill-hands themselves as is actually happening today in Ahmedabad and will presently happen in Jamshedpur.

Young India, 24-9-1925

127. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION[1]

[*September 24, 1925*][2]

Whereas the time has arrived for the establishment of an expert organization for the development of hand-spinning and khaddar, and whereas experience has shown that such development is not possible without a permanent organization, unaffected and uncontrolled by politics, political changes or political bodies, an organization called the All-India Spinners' Association is hereby established with the consent of the All-India Congress

[1] Evidently, the constitution was as per draft which Gandhiji mentions having circulated and which was in some respects amended by others. The article "All-India Spinners' Association", 1-10-1925, refers to a provision or two in the original draft which had to be dropped or changed.

[2] The constitution was finalized at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held at Patna on this date.

Committee, as an integral part of the Congress organization, but with independent existence and powers.

The said Association shall consist of members and associates and donors hereinafter defined and shall have an Executive Council consisting of the following persons who shall hold office for five years:

1. Mahatma Gandhi
2. Maulana Shaukat Ali
3. Syt. Rajendra Prasad
4. Syt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta
5. Syt. Maganlal K. Gandhi
6. Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, Treasurer.
7. Mr. Shuaib Qureshi } Secretaries
8. Syt. Shankerlal G. Banker } Secretaries
9. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru } Secretaries

POWERS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council shall take over all the funds and assets belonging to the All-India Khadi Board and all Provincial Khadi Boards with full powers to administer these and other funds and shall discharge their existing financial obligations.

The Council shall have the right to raise loans, to collect subscriptions, to hold immovable property, to invest funds under proper security, to give and take mortgages for the furtherance of hand-spinning and khaddar, to give financial assistance to khaddar organizations by way of loans, gifts or bounties, to help or establish schools or institutions where hand-spinning is taught, to help or open khadi stores to establish a khaddar service, to act as agency on behalf of the Congress to receive self-spun yarn as subscription to the Congress and to issue certificates, and to do all the things that may be considered necessary for the furtherance of its objects, with power to make regulations for the conduct of affairs of the Association or the Council and to amend them, as also the present constitution, as may be considered necessary from time to time.

Vacancies in the existing Council by death, resignation or otherwise shall be filled by the remaining members.

The Council shall have the right to add to its numbers which shall not exceed 12 at any time and four members shall form the quorum for a meeting of the Council.

All decisions shall be taken by majority of votes.

The Council shall keep an accurate account of all subscriptions, donations and fees, whether in cash or kind, and of ex-

penditure. The books shall be open to public inspection and shall be audited by competent auditors every three months.

The Central office of the Association shall be at the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, and those who are desirous of becoming spinning members of the Congress shall send their yarn subscriptions to the central office with particulars in the following form:

To
THE SECRETARY,
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION,
SABARMATI.

SIR,

I enclose herewith———yards of yarn——— in weight spun by me being my subscription to the National Congress. I am or wish to become a member of the———[1] Congress Committee. My age is———. My occupation is ———. My address is———.

Yours faithfully,
(Signature in legible hand, and if a woman state whether married or unmarried)

Upon receipt of the subscription the Secretary shall examine the quantity and quality of yarn and if found satisfactory shall send to the Congress Committee concerned a certificate in the following form:

This is to certify that———has sent to the A.I.S.A. ———yards of yarn being subscription for membership of the Congress for the year———in——— Congress Committee of———P.C.C.

A duplicate of the certificate with signature of the Secretary shall be sent to the sender of the yarn.

The central office shall keep a separate ledger containing a list with full particulars of all yarn received by the A.I.S.A. for membership of the Congress.

MEMBERS

There shall be two classes of members of the Association, A and B:

(i) The A class shall consist of persons above eighteen years of age and habitually wearing khadi, who deposit regularly from month to month with the treasurer or any agency duly appointed thereto by the Council 1,000 yards of self-spun yarn well-twisted and uniform.

[1] The source has here "State address".

(ii) The B class shall consist of persons above eighteen years of age habitually wearing khadi who pay an annual subscription of 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn, well-twisted and uniform.

Any yarn paid to the Association for membership of the National Congress shall be considered part of the subscription to the Association.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

The duty of every member, both A and B classes, shall be to carry on a propaganda for hand-spinning and khadi.

The members shall have the right to elect from among members of the A class the Executive Council after the expiry by efflux of time of the present Council. The members present at a meeting duly convened may by a three-fourths majority change the constitution of the Association after expiry of five years from the date hereof.

When in any province fifty members have been enrolled, they may elect from among the members of class A, an advisory committee of five to advise the Council about provincial matters relating to the objects of the Association.

ASSOCIATES

Those who pay the All-India Spinners' Association Rs. 12 per year in advance and habitually wear khaddar shall be considered Associate Members of the Association.

Any person who wears khaddar habitually and pays in advance a consolidated amount of Rs. 500 shall become a Life Associate of the Association.

All Associates will be entitled to receive free of charge copies of statements, balance-sheets, and minutes of proceedings of the Councils.

Every person wishing to join the Association shall apply in the following form:

TO
THE SECRETARY,
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION,
SABARMATI.

DEAR SIR,

I have read the rules of the A. I. S. A. I desire to become a member of class/an associate member and I forward herewith my subscription for—Please enrol me as a member.

Yours faithfully,

Young India, 1-10-1925

128. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PATNA[1]

September 24, 1925

Replying to the address Mahatmaji, first of all, thanked the people of Patna and the members of the District Board for the addresses presented to him. Referring to the observation made by Khan Bahadur Nawab Sarfaraz Hussain Khan[2] about Hindu-Muslim unity, he said that there was a time when he did claim that there had come about a real unity between the Hindus and the Mussalmans and that it was going to stay for ever. And he could have justly claimed for himself, then, a great deal of the credit for that result. But he was grieved to say that the same was not true of today. He had already said it so many times, and he would say the same thing that evening, that he had now lost his hold both on the Hindus as well as on the Mohammedans. In that meeting there were present both the Hindus and the Mussalmans but he did not at all deceive himself that their presence was any indication of their acceptance of his creed of Hindu-Muslim unity. Indeed, it went against his grain to go to such meetings, which were attended by people whose hearts were not pure and whose relations with one another were not cordial, and thereby deceive the world and himself regarding the unity between the two communities. He did not like to go even to such meetings as were attended solely by the members of either community. He was trying to look equally on both the Hindus and the Mussalmans and treat them impartially. It was true, as both Indians and even the Westerners had admitted, that his ideal of swaraj and non-co-operation was not intended to do any harm to anyone. It aimed at the well-being of the whole world. And so when the members of the two communities quarrelled among themselves and tried to associate him with one side or the other, he could not go to such meetings. He could not be partial to any one of the communities. He was not prepared to say that Hindus always did the right or that the Mussalmans did no wrong. In fact, both of them were in the wrong and both of them had gone mad. In the circumstances, therefore, the least that he could do was to keep himself away from them, and pray to God to relieve him of the pain and the pang that the existing state of things caused. Let the Hindus and the Mussalmans fight out to their heart's content and, perhaps, then it would be time for him to interfere and ask them what they had gained? He had not wanted to tell them even those few words about the communal trouble, but he had been led to make those observations by the few words uttered by the Chairman.

[1] The meeting, attended by a large number of people, was held in the Baptist Mission Compound at 7.30 p.m.

[2] Member, Bihar Legislative Assembly and Chairman, Reception Committee

But all the same he had hope and trust that despite the present quarrels, Hindus and Mussalmans would unite once again and that soon. In the words of Maulana Shaukat Ali, it was but a temporary fever which was sure to pass off ere long.

Mahatmaji proceeding dwelt upon the importance and necessity of the charkha and khaddar and said that in the present circumstances though Hindu-Muslim unity was no doubt dear to his heart the only thing which was no less dear to him and which he could work was the charkha. It was his firm belief that if there was anything capable of removing the poverty of the country, it was the charkha. If they wanted to remove the poverty of the starving millions in the villages, if they wanted to provide useful occupation for the people in the villages who remained idle at least for four months in the year, they could do it only by the charkha. Those who were opposed to it, Mahatmaji thought, could not suggest any substitute for it. But the charkha could only succeed when all the people took to it. Proceeding, he referred to the newly-formed All-India Spinners' Association and congratulated Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan and the people on his becoming the member of the Association and his agreeing to ply the charkha. The use of khaddar was necessary for the membership of that Association. If the people of Bihar took to khaddar and the charkha, then alone could they remove the poverty of the people as only then would they be able to send millions of money direct to the poor without any intermediary agency. If they purchased, for instance, a yard of khaddar for ten annas, the whole of that amount, including the price paid for cotton, went directly to the poor. But where they used cloth made even in the mills of Bombay and Ahmedabad, not to speak of Manchester and other foreign-made cloth, the major portion of the money went to the capitalists and only a very small portion of it to the poor. When he said that it did not mean that he was opposed to the capitalists amassing wealth—he could not be—but what they had to consider was whether it was just to feed the overfed or the millions of the starving poor. Undoubtedly those who satisfied the hunger of the poor deserved all blessings. The khaddar, in spite of its dearness, was cheap and preferable to mill-made cloth because through khaddar they could directly help the poor. That was why he had decided to devote his life to the cause of khaddar and the charkha and thereby save both the Hindus and the Mussalmans from utter ruin. He therefore wanted them all to become members of the All-India Spinners' Association. There were two classes of membership of the Association. The "A" class of members were required to contribute 1,000 yards of self-spun yarn every month. But those who could not do so might become "B" class members and contribute annually 2,000 yards of yarn. Besides, the members would have always to wear khaddar and khaddar alone.

But all this could not be done without money. He would, therefore, appeal to all to contribute their mite to the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial

Fund, which would be utilized for the propagation of khaddar and the charkha.

Concluding, Mahatmaji condemned untouchability and said that he as a *sanatani* Hindu would tell the *sanatanists* that untouchability was a great sin. Tulsidas preached that their religion demanded that they should be kind unto all. Hatred and contempt had no place in their religion. Let every Hindu be true to his religion and live in terms of peace and amity.[1]

The Searchlight, 27-9-1925

129. SPEECH AT NATIONAL SCHOOL, KHAGAUL[2]

September 24, 1925

Mahatmaji thanked the people who had been helping the school and hoped that they would continue the help that they had been giving for so long. He felt grieved to hear that the number of students had come down to ninety from one hundred and twenty-five. But, for this he was not going to blame the teachers. He knew of many schools where in spite of the very best teachers trying their best, the number had gone down. This was due to the mentality of students and guardians to whom the only end of education was money making.

He was more grieved to learn that their students had not made much progress in spinning. The reason was before him. To expect students to go on with spinning, with as bad spindles as they had been supplied with was impossible. For this he would blame the teachers. If they could not create in the students the love for it, how could they expect them to stick to it with pleasure. The teachers, it seemed, knew nothing of the science of the charkha. They must study it and know that hundreds of charkhas working together must not make a lecture impossible. A very small humming sound was the best.

As to weaving, now there was no excuse for saying that weavers did not accept hand-spun yarn or preferred mill-spun to it. They must know that even badly-spun yarn can be doubled, twisted and made fit for weaving some kind of cloth or another. The best thing was to use better charkhas and to see that the yarn was well spun.

Before he laid the foundation-stone, he wanted to ask them once more to continue their help to the institution so long as it was teaching spinning, teaching Hindi as the common language and fostering national feeling. This

[1] At the end of the speech a collection was made for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

[2] The School was inaugurated by Gandhiji in 1921, as a national institution under the Bihar Vidyapith. On the present occasion, he was laying the foundation-stone of a new building for the school.

was the definition of a national school as conceived by the National Congress. But if it failed in these things, it certainly did not deserve any help and they should from that moment cease to help it.

Then, in the end, with an appeal for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, he concluded his speech and went to the ladies' meeting where a good collection was made.

The Searchlight, 27-9-1925

130. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

It is matter of great grief and disappointment to me not to be able to complete the whole of the Bihar tour as was previously arranged. I see that the continuous travelling for the past 12 months has put a severe strain upon my constitution. I must therefore take the tour in easy stages. The Reception Committee has kindly accommodated me. I hope that the committee and the people in the parts which are being omitted will forgive me. I shall endeavour early next year to finish the balance of the tour.

The Searchlight, 25-9-1925

131. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BIKRAM[1]

September 25, 1925

Mahatmaji . . . first apologized for not being able to go to them the previous day as arranged. Then he told them that he did not know what he was to say to them as the thing which he wanted to say they must have heard already. Their presence in such large numbers was a sufficient proof of it. The belief was growing in him every day that they had nothing except the charkha which would appease the hunger of crores of Indian villagers. They knew that for four months in the year they had no work and that time could be employed best in plying the charkha. The poorest of them had to spend on cloth at least five or ten rupees in a year. The small sum amounted to crores which could be saved and brought in the villages only by the charkha. He did not know why people did not understand such a simple thing. If they did not do such a simple work even, it was impossible to establish swaraj, or *Ramarajya* or whatever they might call it. Those who did not spin for-

[1] Among those who accompanied Gandhiji during his visit to Bikram and later, in the afternoon, to the meeting, were Rajendra Prasad, Jamnalal Bajaj, Satis Chandra Das Gupta, and Jagat Narayan Lal.

merly, he hoped, would begin to spin now. Then he turned towards the organizers of the meeting and said he was grieved to see the children who sang the opening song were not clad in khaddar. He hoped that they would not repeat the mistake. He told the Hindus that Hinduism recognized nothing like untouchability. If anybody thought that touching another man was a sin, he was himself committing a sin.

As to Hindu-Muslim unity he did not know what was to be said. He had lost all influence over both communities. But he did not forget that unless both communities joined hands, swaraj was a dream, never to be realized.

In the end with an appeal for Deshbandhu Das Memorial Fund he concluded.

The Searchlight, 27-9-1925

132. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Saturday, September 26, 1925

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I shall reach Bombay on the 20th [October]. Will you come with me to Kutch on the 21st? If so, you should be in Bombay on the 20th. There is a telegram from Devdhar about Manibehn. I have sent it to her. He is willing to take her in December. We may not put Dahyabhai to work in a mill. If we place him with Birla, it is very likely that he would be put to work only in a mill. We shall talk it over when we meet. I am discussing this with Jamnalalji.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]
I have no time to write more.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Sardar Vallabhbhaine

133. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Saturday [September 26, 1925][1]

CHI. MANI,

I enclose Devdhar's telegram. I think it is better to wait till then. But, meanwhile, if you like, I will try to put you in the Sevasadan at Bombay or, if you wish to work in the Girls' School at Wardha, we could do that. Jamnalalji knows about the school at Calcutta, but he is not in favour of your joining it. He is, however, willing to make arrangements at the Girls' School at Wardha. There is Marathi in Wardha and you will feel at home there, so it is better to have your first experience there.

Let me know what you wish to do.

Send your reply to me at Patna.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne

134. KHADI PROGRAMME

Although the following letter is full of criticism, I print it in the hope that all workers may learn from it whatever is worth learning:[3]

I hope that no worker will misunderstand the aim behind this criticism. It is the duty of khadi workers to accept whatever part of it is applicable. What has been described as "inducement" by the critic I would call protection or "bounty" as it is known in English. We have forsaken khadi for a long time. It is natural that help should be necessary in the initial stage in order to propagate khadi amongst people who have less or no patriotism in them. Everyone knows that such assistance cannot be given for ever. Even during the period when assistance is given, there

[1] As in the source

[2] Gandhiji was in Patna from September 20 to September 29 and also from October 12 to October 15.

[3] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had argued that the cause of khadi could prosper only through the spontaneous endeavour of farmers and not through the efforts of outside workers.

must be a gradual but continuous improvement in the quality of khadi, the cost of production should come down and the quantum of help diminish. All this is happening. There has been an improvement in the quality, there has been a reduction in the cost and in the assistance given. I am not pained by the fact that the cloth produced in the Amreli Centre is being sent to Bombay, but it pains me that so little is sold in Amreli itself. This is a measure of the sad plight of our country. The thoughtful people of Amreli have not understood their natural duty of wearing khadi. They fail to take advantage of the Ganga which flows by their doorstep. Time alone will improve this state of affairs. The residents of Amreli should let the khadi centre know if it is to blame for sending out locally-manufactured cloth. As far as I know the centre does try to sell khadi locally but its efforts have not met with the success they deserve. In these circumstances, we cannot indeed deprive the poor in Amreli of the help they receive by way of wages for spinning. It is, of course, necessary to see that the women who spin start wearing khadi themselves. Experience suggests that even this cannot be brought about all at once. The women who spin for money do so only to earn something and connot be asked to buy expensive khadi. They will wear khadi only if we reduce its price for them.

Hence, khadi workers who wish to make khadi wholly self-supporting should take account of the difficulties involved. If they do not, it will be impossible to advance the cause of khadi. In such circumstances, one should use one's common sense as to when one should rest satisfied with a little and when one may rest satisfied with anything short of perfection.

But we also need the services of workers who are disinclined to work in such an imperfect field and aim at perfection. The following ways are open to them:

1. If they have the necessary strength—that is, the strength to work and maintain themselves with a little—they should spend all their time in carding, spinning and, if they feel inclined, weaving and thus become self-reliant.

2. Those who do not have such strength should spend in spinning all the time they can spare from their own work and gift that yarn for the sake of the country.

It should not be necessary to say that they themselves should exclusively wear khadi and persuade others to do so. Let us consider in this connection the principles on which the khadi movement is based:

1. Crores of people in India are so poor that a few pice have the same value to them as one rupee.

2. Crores of them remain unemployed for four months in a year.

3. For such persons, there is no other work which can be taken up by one and all and which will produce immediate results.

A khadi worker should objectively apply these principles to his own sphere of work. Only then can we say that the khadi movement is being carried on in a scientific manner. In other words:

1. Those who have other occupations from which they earn something should not be induced to spin for money.

2. Only in those parts where the people are very poor should they induce them to spin for money and even in such places they should pay no more in wages than the country can afford. Experience shows that not more than four annas can be paid for a seer (the weight of forty rupees) of number six yarn.

3. In other places those who spin can be helped only by way of instruction, etc. To spend money for them is to harm the interests of the poor who really need it. It would be a different matter if they themselves offered to pay for instruction. It would also be a different matter if in a place like Bardoli some people gifted cotton and it was then distributed among others.

4. No money should be spent for those who spin by way of *yajna*. Yarn received in this manner should be treated as a pure gift. It is wrong to accept anything as gift if securing the gift costs as much as the thing itself.

5. Other expenses should be incurred only on training khadi workers, that is, on giving training in spinning, etc., on carrying on propaganda for khadi and on improvements in the spinning-wheel. To put it briefly, money should be spent only when it is likey to benefit the poor for whose sake the spinning movement has been conceived.

Wherever these principles are not followed, there is either ignorance or false attachment, or both, behind the work being done.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 27-9-1925

135. SOME QUESTIONS

A teacher from Kutch has asked several questions, which I reproduce below and answer, as they deserve to be answered in public:

> 1. I am a school-teacher. I do not possess the required strength of character, truthfulness or capacity for *brahmacharya,* though of course I have been making every effort to develop these qualities. My father is in debt. In these circumstances, do you advise me to resign my post as teacher?

I think that the idea of resigning on the ground of not possessing the necessary strength of character is a very good one. Nevertheless, it is necessary to exercise discretion in this matter. It should not be considered necessary to resign if, as we go ahead with our work, our shortcomings gradually disappear. None of us is perfect. At present we do not come across much strength of character among teachers. We may be satisfied if we are conscientious in our own work and put in our best effort. In such matters, however, the same rule cannot be applied to all. Everyone should decide for himself.

The question about the father's debt is easy to answer. If it was properly incurred, it should be repaid. If he cannot repay it by working as a teacher, he should take up another job or another profession and repay it.

> 2. Apart from the moral benefit, is there any advantage to health to be derived from a weekly day of silence?

In a general way, one may say, silence is beneficial to health. However, a person who finds no happiness in silence will derive no benefit to his health.

> 3. In your book entitled *General Knowledge about Health* you have said that both milk and salt should be given up, the former from the point of view of non-violence and the latter for the sake of health. Anyone who gives up milk would also have to give up ghee, buttermilk and other milk products. Has your opinion on this subject undergone any change, or does it remain what it was?

My views on this subject have not changed, but my practice has. It is my conviction that those who do without milk derive benefit spiritually. Giving up milk and milk products helps one in observing *brahmacharya.* Anyone who gives up milk should

also give up buttermilk or ghee. Whether out of my strong desire to live or as a matter of necessity, I consented to take goat's milk. If I were not working in public life, I would again give up milk and continue my experiment. Unfortunately, I have not met any doctor, *vaid* or *hakim* who would guide me in my experiment of milk-free diet. I had hoped that *vaids* would be helpful. I had assumed that the health of the soul had a place in their system. But I have not met a *vaid* who would inspire confidence in me. I have, therefore, been obliged to use milk. I see that it is useful for preserving one's life and health and, therefore, no longer advise anyone to give it up. I do not, however, wish to alter the views expressed in my book. Some of my friends still experiment with a milk-free diet, and I neither discourage nor encourage them.

There are two opinions regarding salt. I do not think that going without salt does any harm. However, I no longer insist upon avoiding salt completely. I know that temporary or permanent abstinence from salt is beneficial from the spiritual point of view. We should remember that through water, etc., we take in a little quantity of salt every day. If anyone wants to try the experiment of milk-free or salt-free diet for the purpose of health, it is desirable that he should do so after consulting a good doctor or *vaid*. Anyone who wants to try this for spiritual reasons should be strong in his desire for a life of abstinence.

4. Anyone who wants to practise ahimsa would have to abstain from almost all kinds of food. Even eating fruit involves violence, as there is life in fruits and flowers too. However, there can be no objection to eating ripe fruits which have fallen from the tree without anyone having plucked them. But a poor person like me would find it very expensive to live on such fruits. One may, however, live only on wheat, availing oneself of the freedom permitted in certain times and circumstances. Even wheat may be taken only in the form of porridge made from the bran. Vegetables and fruits may be excluded altogether. Would you believe it possible, then, or say from experience, that a young man of nineteen, such as I am, who wishes to remain a *brahmachari* for life, can live his whole life eating only this porridge morning and evening and whether it can provide sufficient nourishment for him?

Even the ripe fruit that falls to the ground has life in it and, therefore, eating it should also be regarded as a sin. The fact of our having a body is itself an evil, and wherever there is evil there is suffering. Hence the imperative need for *moksha*. One cannot, however, be rid of the body by destroying it. Our association

with the body can be totally ended only through complete freedom from desire, indifference to material happiness and renunciation. Desire or the ego is the root cause of the body. Once they have vanished, the body cannot but cease to exist. But while the body continues to exist, one must have the minimum quantity of food necessary to keep it functioning. Man's essential requirements of nutrition are met by fruits and foods obtained from plants. Anyone who subsists on the smallest quantity of these, obtaining them with the least violence to ethical principles may be said to be free from sin though living on impure food. Such a person eats not in order to satisfy his palate but to keep himself alive, to keep the body functioning. It will now be seen that a ripe fruit which has fallen off the tree, if eaten to gratify one's palate will be tainted food while a cooked meal of vegetables and cereals, prepared and served in the normal course, will be pure food if eaten to satisfy one's hunger and without any thought of gratifying the palate.

I believe that a person of self-control who is free from any disease, can subsist only on porridge of wheat bran. My advice to the correspondent is that it will be enough if he takes ordinary food, without chillies or other spices, paying no attention to its taste or savour. For observing *brahmacharya*, the essential thing is to learn to be indifferent to the pleasures which objects of sense give. A person who enjoys all manner of rich dishes cannot be said to have conquered the desire for material pleasure. The common people, however, who eat ordinary food may be regarded as having done so. In the last analysis, every individual should examine himself to find out when he eats in order to gratify his palate and when to meet the needs of his body. Even in the matter of food, we have no straight path before us. The only straight path there is in life is one's heart. The external world is a deceitful illusion; it is like an enormous banyan tree with intertwining boughs, and one has to live in this and attain union with the *Brahman*.

5. If the mind is hankering after food and the body, too, is very hungry, does it do any good to repress the desire and fast?

Whether or not a fast will do any good depends on one's motive and one's capacity to undertake it. The poet has compared the mind to a drunken ape, and to be sure there is no end to its desires. These should be checked every moment.

6. I do not take tea, but the other members of my family do. As I am the earning member, would it be proper on my part to prevent them

from doing so by not buying any tea at all? Irrespective of whether or not I am the earning member, would it be regarded as coercion on my relatives if I made them give up tea by resorting to fasting?

The head of the family or the earning member who stops other members from taking tea because he himself does not do so is employing coercion. The right thing for him is to reason with them patiently. As long as they are not converted to his views, I believe that he should buy tea for them. Resorting to fasting simply because others do not stop doing a particular thing is a form of blackmail, and that is coercion.

7. I believe that no one is reformed through physical punishment. If, nevertheless, I punished pupils in my class, would that not be violence on my part? If I did not punish the naughty or the dull pupils myself and sent them instead to the head master, knowing that he would punish them, would I not, in that case, be guilty of violence?

There is violence in punishing pupils and also in sending them to the head master in order that they may be punished. The correspondent has not asked whether a teacher is free to punish any pupil, but the question is implied in the one which he has asked. I myself can imagine a situation in which it becomes one's duty to punish a child who has done something wrong, knowing that it is wrong. Every teacher should think and decide for himself what his duty is. The general rule, however, is that a teacher should never inflict physical punishment on a pupil. If anyone should have this right at all, let it rest with the parents. A punishment is just only if the pupil himself accepts it as such. Such occasions are not frequent. Even when an occasion has arisen, the pupil should not be punished if there is any doubt about the punishment being justified. In any case, no one should be punished in anger.

8. Supposing I am not really angry—for I know that anger has a harmful effect both on health and character—but even then pretend to be angry with a pupil or threaten to punish without intending to do so, would that be a dishonest act on my part?

We find many people guilty of this wrong. To pretend to punish is altogether reprehensible.

9. I accept the argument that observing *brahmacharya* is the only right method of birth-control. Though my heart accepts this, my reason revolts against it and doubts whether, in the same way that there can be no wrong in the use of any of the other sense-organs, that it might do harm on the contrary not to use them, it might not be harmful not to exer-

cise this function of the body. It was to this effect that the president of the committee for birth-control had addressed a letter to you in *The Chronicle*. Would you, therefore, deal with this argument?

There is no such principle that the use of all organs of the body is essential. The man who deliberately gives up the use of speech lays the world under an obligation. Dharma requires not that we use the sense-organs but that we control them. Control of the senses practised intelligently and voluntarily is beneficial spiritually, and not harmful. The use of the sexual organs is permitted only for the sake of procreation. However, the Shastras honour those who renounce the desire for progeny. The glorification of passion is taken to such lengths in this age that irreligion has come to be known as religion. It is a grave error to believe that the world is benefited by the encouragement or gratification of lust. This is my conviction, this is the testimony of the Shastras and this is the undisputed experience of people who have realized the self. In India, we are forced into the prison of marriage right from childhood. In such circumstances, to devise means for the gratification of passion and establish associations for popularizing them is the very limit of ignorance and of blind imitation. To say that passion cannot be curbed or that curbing it is harmful is itself very harmful. I have no doubt that the Indian nation will lose vigour and finally perish if a movement for encouraging the gratification of lust ever comes to thrive in this country of weaklings. Methods of birth-control which permit the gratification of lust may not be harmful in countries where the human body has the strength of a monster and is nourished on food and drink proper for a monster, but India's good lies only in the lesson of self-control.

10. One who practises ahimsa cannot use any conveyance and must give up eating almost all edible substances. The question then arises, why did God create these substances and these animals which draw the vehicles? God's will is inscrutable, but, I shall be obliged if all the same you could say something on this subject.

The answer to this is included in the answer given above. Nevertheless, it could be added that one who practises ahimsa does not necessarily refuse the use of vehicles for conveyance when absolutely necessary. There are many things which it is best to give up altogether. There are some which it would be enough to give up as far as possible. All God's creations are related to one another. Every creature is the living image of some human desire or other. Just as, therefore, it is good to renounce desire,

it is good to stop exploiting other living beings. Everyone should set his own limits. For instance, those who can make do with earth may not use soap, but they should also not be guilty of greater violence by criticizing others who do use soap. While walking on throny or hot ground, one may freely use shoes to protect one's feet, but one should walk barefoot when there is no need to wear shoes.

There are some other questions which need not be stated, as they can be inferred from the answers given.

1. It is absolutely necessary for anyone doing exercise to wear drawers. Even in the West they think it necessary to do this.

2. It is beneficial to drink hot water in the morning soon after rising and brushing one's teeth. Many people drink even cold water which is clean. In any case, the practice does no harm.

3. To grow one's hair while living as a householder means either accumulating dirt on one's person or spending much time in keeping it clean. The best thing for a man is to keep only a small tuft of hair in the centre and have the rest cut or shaved. If people would listen to me, I would certainly have even girl's hair cut. We believe that hair adds to one's beauty because we are used to growing hair long. Beauty lies in conduct and not in external appearance. That hair cannot be cut or shaved as it is something natural is a mere superstition. We cut our nails. If we failed to do so, they would accumulate dirt, or we would have to be cleaning them the whole day. By taking a bath we constantly remove the outer layer on skin. We shall not consider here the rules which apply to those who live in forests and have stopped doing many things which people normally do.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-9-1925

136. MY NOTES

Is It True?

I was absolutely taken aback by the account which I read in *Navajivan* of the High School in Borsad. I feel all the time that it could not be true. I have a faint recollection that I have met the head master of that school. I know him as a brave person. Vallabhbhai has lived in Borsad and has unfurled the flag of victory there. Could such disgraceful conduct be possible on the part of the principal, parents and students? If Vithalbhai, who is the President of the Assembly, can attend it in only a khadi shirt, cannot the students of Borsad go to school clad in a similar way?

If Shri Kalidas Dave[1] has been misinformed, I request the head master to correct his error. If the information is correct and there is anything which he would like to say in defence, I am prepared to hear it and publish it. If there is no defence, I hope that teachers, trustees and parents would not descend so low in order to secure recognition for the school.

The "Goshala" at Chaibasa

Chaibasa is a small town in Chhotanagpur. The scenery there is beautiful and the climate is good. I was taken to see the *goshala* there. The secretary is an energetic man. His views are liberal but the donors do not let him have his way. The criticism I have made against other *goshalas* applies to this one too. This institution has been in existence for twenty-seven years. During this period, a sum of one and a half lakhs of rupees has been received by way of donations and ten thousand head of cattle have been provided shelter. Two to three hundred are given shelter every year. But we cannot rest satisfied with this. A *goshala*, if run systematically, would become self-supporting in twenty-seven years. Milk, curds, etc., are produced in this one. But how much can one person do? How is it possible to have the animals examined so long as there is no expert in animal husbandry available?

A special feature of this *goshala* which was brought to my knowledge was that dead cattle were given away free. Nothing was charged for their hides. The more I think about the matter the more I realize that by not utilizing hides, etc., of dead cows through the *goshala* we encourage cow-slaughter and reduce our

[1] Editor, *Kelavani Ank*—the educational supplement of *Navajivan*

capacity to protect cows. One of the principal tasks of those working in this field is to fight the superstitious prejudice against trading in hides of dead cattle. One dead cow, it may be said, saves the life of another cow. I am making a thorough study of the economics of this subject. But even my present partial study is enough to convince me that we lose at least ten rupees on each animal which dies by not directly utilizing its hide. In any case, it is ultimately we who use this hide.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 27-9-1925

137. LETTER TO BISHAN NATH

September 27, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

You have not told me why you are leaving the board nor why your interest or faith in khadi is on the wane. I see nothing wrong in accepting wages for national service faithfully rendered.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

LALA BISHAN NATH
PUNJAB KHADDAR BOARD
PURI
LAHORE

From a photostat: G.N. 7942

138. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

Aso Sud 10 [September 27, 1925][1]

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have both your letters. You may come and stay at Dr. Mehta's bungalow. Occupy only the portion that you need, so that the rest may be available for other visitors. Decide this matter with Chi. Chhaganlal and Maganlal. Start collecting literature on cow-protection. Think over it and find out how the cow-protection movement started. Take help, if you need, from someone. Collect literature on dairies and tanneries. I hope you will become a spin-

[1] From the postmark

ning member of the cow-protection association. Much against my wish, I am publishing that pamphlet[1] as a supplement of *Y.I.* Read my explanation in *Y.I.*

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7741. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

139. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Ashvina Sud 10 [September 27, 1925][2]

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letter. You must now be steady, that is, steady in mind. You must definitely tell me what worries you even now. I am both father and mother. If a daughter does not confide everything to her mother, to whom else will she? As the train is moving, I cannot write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]
Till the 15th: Bihar
20th: Bombay
21st to 3rd Nov.: Kutch
Then Ashram

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9219; also C.W. 468. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] The reference is to the "Cow-protection Supplement" issued by the Ghatkopar Humanitarian Association without the permission of Gandhiji, who was then the President of the All-India Cow-protection Association, but in anticipation of it. For Gandhiji's comments on this supplement, *vide* "Notes", 1-10-1925.

[2] The letter bears the postmark, Bhagalpur: 1-10-1925. *Ashvina Sud* 10 fell on September 27.

140. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

PATNA,
Aso Sud 10 [*September 27, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I shall not trouble you much about Lohani just now.

Jamnalalji told me that the amount of Rs. 25,000 you gave to the Muslim University was to be considered as part of the Rs. 60,000 promised by you at Juhu. Such was [not] my understanding; and I was planning to spend Rs. 60,000 on other things. But if what you meant was in fact not what I thought you meant, I have nothing to say.

There is another thing. You know my views on cow-protection. Shri Madhusudan Das owns a tannery at Cuttack which he has developed into a limited company. I feel like acquiring a majority of its shares with a view to controlling it for public benefit in the interest of cow-protection. The tannery's liabilities amount to Rs. 1,20,000. It is necessary to rescue it from this dead weight. The tannery uses only the hides of dead animals, but the hides of specially-killed *patlaghos*[2] are also used. In case it is decided to take over the tannery, three conditions should be insisted on:

1. Only hides of dead animals will be taken;
2. The practice of killing *patlaghos* for the sake of their hides must be discontinued;
3. The idea of charging interest[3] must be given up; if there is any profit, it should be used for the expansion of the tannery.

I would like you to take over the tannery provided it is available on these terms; I would also like you to undertake its management. If that is not practicable, I shall find someone else who can manage it. The tannery has a few acres of land which I have seen myself. Shri Madhusudan Das has spent a considerable amount on it out of his own pocket.

[1] Reference in the letter to the tour in Bihar which Gandhiji left on October 15, 1925, suggests that the letter was written in that year.

[2] Kind of iguana

[3] In the source the word 'सूत' (yarn) has been used. It appears to be a slip for the word 'सूद' (interest).

Thirdly, there is the All-India
you give your co-operation in this
contribute a handsome amount to
Memorial Fund.

Jamnalalji will have a detailed ta
matters, if he happens to meet you i

Is your wife feeling better?

I shall be in Bihar till the 15th.

Iours sincerely,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 6113; also *Gandhijiki Chhatrachhayamen*
Courtesy: G. D. Birla

141. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

The A.I.C.C. has come to a wise decision. It enables the Cawnpore Congress to devote its full time to the problem of the hour and to devise a method to make it possible for others to join it. But, before it could do so, it had to set right the relations between the two Congress Parties. The All-India Congress Committee has done that. The All-India Spinners' Association has been installed to further the Congress cause and not in opposition to it. All Congressmen and others who believe in the value of spinning should join it and make it a success.

The Hindu, 28-9-1925

142. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

Aso Sud 11 [September 28, 1925][1]

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letters. Owing to the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee,[2] a lot of papers are in arrears. I shall be in Bihar till the 15th. Then I shall go direct from Bombay to Kutch. I shall reach the Ashram by 6th November. Take care of your health. How did you keep in the Ashram? Did you like your stay there? How was Laxmi doing?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 467. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

[1] From the postmark

[2] Held at Patna on September 22, 23 and 24

143. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Aso Sud 11 [September 28, 1925][1]

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. We must take care of both the parties. In some parts of India where there is acute poverty, a lot of khadi is made. We must make others wear it. Are the millionaires going to spin all the yarn they need for themselves?

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5698

144. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

Aso Sud 11 [September 28, 1925][2]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND[3],

I have both your letters. If the untouchables are denied the right to enter the Municipality, try to educate public opinion. Go to Thakore Saheb[4] but do not start a satyagraha. The *Antyajas* can go to the Municipality and fight. What is needed is patience. You may read what I have said in a general way about [caste] dinners in my article[5] sent for *Navajivan* If we work patiently, calmly and gently, the *mahajan* will come round.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2830. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

[1] From the postmark; the date of delivery is 2-10-1925.

[2] From the postmark

[3] Fulchand Kasturchand Shah, a Congress worker of Wadhwan in Saurashtra

[4] The ruler of the then princely State of Wadhwan

[5] Gandhiji refers here, presumably, to his article, "If Expelled from One's Community", 11-10-1925.

145. LETTER TO GOPABANDHU DAS

PATNA,
September 29, 1925

EAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. After all I am glad you did not come to atna. For I was able to understand the case against Mahavir ingh[1] without any difficulty. Both Niranjan Babu and he were resent. It has now been arranged that Niranjan Babu should :nd Mahavir Singh the papers he wants. There would be no ifficulty about getting his admission of the debt. But there is likely ɔ be great difficulty about recovery. I have undertaken to settle ɔe dispute about the jurisdiction in Singhbhum, C.P., Andhra nd elsewhere, so far as the Congress is concerned. I should ery much like you to have a written case prepared together with he evidence you will produce in support of your case. Each case hould be short and precise. I would then ask for the replies of he other parties. I am glad of your determination to stick to he flood area and organize charkha relief there. I would like 'ou so much to succeed in this effort of yours. I hope you liked he A.I.C.C. resolutions and the All-India Spinners' Association :onstitution. I hope you are keeping well. I send you herewith ι resolution[2] received from Sambalpur.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7747. Courtesy: Radhanath Rath

[1] President, Utkal Provincial Congress Committee. He had been charged by the Sambalpur District Congress Committee with "embezzlement of national money".

[2] Not reproduced here. The resolution *inter alia* invited Gandhiji to settle the dispute between the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee and the Sambalpur District Congress Committee.

146. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

PATNA,
September 29, 1925

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I have received a copy of the Government's order regarding Mr. Nanjappa's case. How do you think we should proceed?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: C.W. 3116. Courtesy: K. N. Kelkar

147. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, PATNA[1]

September 29, 1925

Mahatma Gandhi replying expressed his gratitude for the presentation of the address. It was not the first time that he had come into their midst. It was now four years since he had met them last and, though he recollected the details of that visit vividly and the fact that though both he and they were the same, the difference between then and now was tremendous. He scarcely needed to dilate on it, the difference in the atmosphere about them and in their outlook. He was glad to be able to meet them and he would like to address them briefly on their civic duties and problems connected with municipal life which was dear to him and of which he could claim some knowledge. If the municipal commissioners and citizens of a town were to attend seriously to municipal improvement, they would be doing a great service to the country. It was supremely necessary to do so, for the reflection of town life on their villages was unmistakable. If town life was dirty, the dirt and the squalor were reflected in the villages as well. If they had cinemas in the towns, village life was also to some extent influenced. He had seen this interconnection between towns and villages for himself in Bengal and he remembered vividly the charges made against town-dwellers by village folk. On the residents in a town the responsibility lay not only of keeping their towns pure, their lanes clean, but they had a duty towards their village brethren. Little though that duty might be, it made them in some sense the trustees of the villages. In the manner they in the towns conducted themselves, the people in the villages would.

[1] The meeting, organized by the Patna Municipality, was held in Mangal's Tank Grounds and was largely attended. An address was presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the Municipality.

The worst was their inner life was becoming as dirty as the dirt accumulated about them. There were not many roads in Patna and yet, when he saw their condition, he felt pained beyond measure just as he was on seeing the degeneration in their inner life. There were some very pertinent questions in respect of their civic duties which he would put before them. Did they properly look after the cleanliness of the town or did they leave it solely to the *Bhangis*? What arrangements, if any, had they made for supply of pure and cheap milk to the children? Were their men and women as dirty as were likely to impart their own dirt to others? What did they do for their untouchables? And, lastly, did they have drink shops in the town and, if so, how many? He knew they could not altogether control the number and the existence of these shops and much depended on the Government. But it was not altogether the fault of the Government either, for if they bestirred themselves, satisfied those who drank about the evils the habit generated and provided them with suitable substitutes, why should people insist on infesting the grog shops? These were all questions which the ratepayers should attend to. If they did that, they could once more make their towns as clean and as beautiful as they were in the past.

He had often used strong language about Western civilization; he stood by all that he had said and he had to withdraw nothing. But he could distinguish good from bad and see and accept good even in things evil. And in this matter of civic life, the West had gone very much ahead. In the Western countries, particularly in England and America, people lived mostly in towns because they were not agriculturists, but engaged in industrial labour. How to keep their towns clean, how to provide those necessities and amenities which were unavoidable for decent living—in these the Westerners were truly their exemplars. Drink, of course, was rampant in the West. But let them take a look at how they dealt with epidemics in the West. The manner in which they grappled with it, stemmed its onward progress and finally killed it contrasted disagreeably with the apathy they in India displayed over the matter. He would appeal to them never to overlook the solemn duties that devolved on them as citizens of a town, to think over them earnestly and to discharge them to the best of their powers.

Adverting to the question of untouchables, Mahatmaji was glad they had frankly admitted their fault in the address they had presented him.[1] But admissions were valuable only if they were followed by efforts to remove the things admitted. Till they were able to serve their untouchable brethren to enter into their lives and to remove the hardships which beset them, they would fail in the discharge of their solemn duty. To say that they were Hin-

[1] The address had stated: " . . . No special arrangements have been made for the uplift of the untouchables and the depressed—a cause most dear to your heart—although there have been in existence two schools for the untouchables and there is no restriction to their admission in the other schools as well."

dus and believed in the religion of *daya* and dharma and yet to shun untouchables was to emphasize an incompatibility. If they said that their religion taught them to believe in *himsa*, he had nothing to say to them. But if, on the other hand, they believed in ahimsa as a cardinal principle of their faith, they could not possibly face the world with that crime of untouchability on their head.

Proceeding Mahatmaji said that, if they were earnest in atoning for the stink they had been introducing into the villages, they could not help remembering the grim poverty in the land and thus they were brought face to face with the only feasible remedy of that poverty—spinning and the charkha. He prayed that the townsmen should have this much of sense in them as to realize that, if they could not purify the villages, they could at least do their bit to remove poverty. God would not forgive them for shunning cloth made of yarn produced by their sisters in the villages, regarding that cloth as coarse, and to take to mill produce, thereby plunging their sisters into poverty. He was grieved to find that the khaddar depot in the town sold only Rs. 2,000 worth of cloth every month and that there was Rs. 2,00,000 worth of stock in the depot. It was a complete misunderstanding of the real scope and purpose of khaddar for people to urge that imported and Indian mill-made stuffs were comparatively cheaper. They must remember that all that they paid for khaddar went directly into the pockets of their poorer countrymen, whereas but a small fraction of it did so in the case of the cloth manufactured in the Indian mills. Their duty towards the poorer brothers was supreme and must transcend all other considerations, so much so that he for one would not appreciate that, while they starved the poor, they might present him with gilded addresses.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji said that he had deliberately refrained from speaking of Hindu-Muslim unity, for holding as he did that both Hindus and Mohammedans had gone mad it was no use speaking to lunatics. But if they dwelt awhile on all that he had told them, he felt he would feel he had not come to them in vain.

Concluding, the speaker appealed to the people present to contribute to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund which was being raised for the purpose of village reconstruction that was so dear to the late lamented leader.

The Searchlight, 7-10-1925

148. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

September 30, 1925

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

We are living in strange times. Sitla Sahai may defend himself. Please keep me informed of further developments. What is he? Is he a lawyer? Had he ever any connection with revolutionary activity?

As for the Congress, it would be better to make it as simple as possible so as to enable the present remaining workers to cope with it. I know that your burden will be now increased. But you must not endanger your health in any way whatsoever. I am anxious about your health. I do not at all like these frequent attacks of fever you are having. I wish you could give yourself and Kamala a holiday.

Father has written to me. Of course, I never wanted to go as far as he supposes. I would not think of asking anyone to support Father. But I would not hesitate to ask a friend or friends who would consider it a privilege to pay you for your public services. I would press you to take it from public funds, if your wants owing to the situation in which you are and must be were not extraordinary. I am myself convinced that you should contribute to the common purse either by doing some business or by letting your personal friends find funds for retaining your services. There is no immediate hurry but without fretting about it, come to a final decision. I will not mind even if you decided to do some business. I want your mental peace. I know that you will serve the country even as manager of a business. I am sure that Father will not mind any decision you may arrive at so long as it gives you complete peace.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

I see that I must reserve the right hand for *Y.I.*

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 44

149. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Aso Sud 13, 1981 [September 30, 1925]

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. It is good that you have discussed the matter in detail. Let me first take up what you have written about the franchise of the new khadi organization.[1] You must have come to know from the newspapers that there are two categories of franchise. [A member of] the first category has to spin and send one thousand yards every month, while [a member of] the second has to spin and send two thousand yards every year. We can include the professional spinners in the second category, but we shall not do so just now. We should so work that we do not give rise to the fear that we may capture the Congress with the help of these voters. In this way we can free the Swaraj Party from fear and suspicion. It does not mean that we want to restrict the number of new spinners. We should enrol as many of them as possible, and herein lies the success of this Association. By putting a contribution of two thousand yards for the second category, we have made it easy for the new spinners. Even half a pound of cotton is not consumed in spinning two thousand yards of yarn of five or six counts. This much cotton would cost less than 4 annas and, if the yarn is finer, it would hardly cost 2 as. Whatever the member contributes to the Association over and above the cost of cotton is like his respectful offering to the spinning-wheel. And at present the Association would welcome even this. So you see this suits your wishes. Now let us consider the next problem raised by you, that of the production and sale of khadi.

In regard to the sale of khadi the procedure of the old Association is quite clear. It gives interest-free advances against good surety to traders in khadi. The margin of profit has been kept at 6¼ per cent so that they should not be tempted to charge higher prices and exploit the people's love for khadi; in case of loss, the association undertakes to compensate it by a bounty of 2 per cent. In this manner, the traders will gradually stand on their own, and the Association will have little to do in this regard. Thus, you will find that there is nothing to object to in this procedure, seeing

[1] The All-India Spinners' Association, whose constitution was finalized on September 24, 1925

My dear Jawahar,

We are living in strange times. Sitta Sahai ~~must~~ may defend himself. ~~Have you seen him?~~ Please keep me informed of further developments. What is he? Is he a lawyer? Had he ever any connection with revolutionary activity?

As for the Congress, it would be better to make it as simple as possible so as to enable the present remaining workers to cope with it. And I know that your burden will be now increased. But you must not endanger yourself in any way whatsoever. I am anxious about your health. I do not at all like these frequent attacks of fever you are having. I wish you could give yourself and Kamala a holiday.

FROM A LETTER: WRITTEN WITH THE LEFT HAND

also overleaf

I want your mental peace. I know that you will serve the country even as manager of a business. I am sure that Father will not mind any decision you may arrive at so long as it gives you complete peace.

Yours

Bapu

30.9.25

I see that I must reserve the right hand for M.G.

that it involves little botheration and has the additional advantage of getting the use of the traders' capital.

Now let us come to the question of production. This involves training people through the spread of education in schools to spin and wear clothes made out of their own yarn. This work must continue. The result of this effort, however, will be visible only in the long run. Therefore, it would not be right to depend entirely on this. The more I observe the more I notice that we have not yet been able to reach those areas where the spinning-wheel is natural and cheap. In some of these areas, the work is going on in such a way that they can afford to maintain skilled workers and pay them adequate wages. We can easily put the khadi work on a sound footing by deputing to such areas adequately paid experts in the craft and the economics of khaddar to remedy the few defects found there. If we cut down on this, it would be short-sighted economy. Therefore I think it necessary to employ paid experts in the trade and technique of khadi. I see the need of many such men. But we do not have trained men. Therefore, we must find men who claim to love this work and undertake to train them. I have also seen from experience that it won't do to have men who have had mere superficial training. It is essential to give them thorough training. For this purpose, we should have one or more centres to impart all-round training in khadi.

Thus, we will try to infuse life in those areas which show signs of hope, but which are dormant and backward. At the same time, we shall have to put in great effort in some areas which seem to be recalcitrant. We shall have to patronize the weavers also for some time. Otherwise, there will always be danger of every kind of deceit and frequent depression, and it is quite likely that our work may be washed out. In order to cope with all these problems, I think we need an army of efficient, staunch and honest workers. We must not be impatient in this matter. We should be careful in the choice of men. We should also practise strict economy. I am sure all this work will not be difficult if we are alert. I have no doubt that as and when these areas get stabilized, they will earn the hire of the workers. I am already noticing several such instances.

Besides this, there are many other matters which I wish to explain to you. But I leave them for another occasion. Remember that khadi has to be produced also to prevent famine. We may not turn back a single woman who wants to spin for her livelihood. Hence we will need houses, etc.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5727

150. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[*September/October, 1925*][1]

MY DEAREST CHARLIE,

Though you do not want me to write to you, I cannot help.

What can be the cause of Gurudev wanting you? God who has kept you from harm so long, will keep you as long as He needs your service. But you sometimes will not help Him even where you can and must. And for you to have nervousness about anything or anybody is bad. When I see you anxious about anything, I ask myself, what is the meaning of 'Be careful for nothing'.

Your Jamshedpur report is wonderful. Only you could have written it. No beating about the bush.

I am all with you in keeping up the *langoti* for the Bhil children.

With deepest love,

Yours,
MOHAN

[PS.]

Never again eating rich foods even to please the host. I should like that definite promise.

[PPS.]

Kristodas has just showed me your reference to a cobra creeping on me. I wish what you say was a true account. The gentleman did creep up, but that was after prayer whilst I was lying and we were talking. There was even a little stir. I kept still while a friend removed the cloth covering me on which it had crept. You should send a correction I think.

6, DWARKANATH LANE

From a photostat: G.N. 2640; also *Charles Freer Andrews*, p. 208

[1] The date is as given in *Charles Freer Andrews* by Benarsidas Chaturvedi and Marjorie Sykes. Cf., however, Vol. XXIV, p. 196, where the subject of *langoti* for Bhil children referred to in the letter is first discussed.

151. THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The transfer of power into the Swarajists' hands was completed by the All-India Congress Committee at Patna. The resolutions[1] were keenly debated and on the whole with the greatest self-restraint. The majorities for the different parts of the resolution were not always as large as I had expected or desired, so as to warrant a change in the constitution of a parent body by its subordinate. But I feel that I consulted the best interests of the country in allowing the resolutions. I have admitted before now that the making of the change in the constitution was outside the ordinary jurisdiction of the All-India Congress Committee and that it was of the nature of a rebellion. But I hold that it is the duty of every institution jealous of its reputation courageously to face such a crisis if it is convinced that the rebellion is needed for the existence or welfare of the institution itself. It was for that reason that I invited the Committee in the first instance to decide whether a crisis had arisen justifying a change in the constitution without waiting for the Congress session. The majority in favour of an immediate change was overwhelming. I was not, therefore, insistent upon similar majorities in connection with votes for the resolution itself. It now remains for the Congress either to endorse the action of the All-India Congress Committee or to censure it by rejecting it or even to censure the action even while accepting its decision, it being an accomplished fact. It was suggested by one or two members that censure was an impossible thing because the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee was to be enforced immediately and that therefore those who would come to the Congress would come naturally under the new franchise and those who benefited by it could hardly be expected to censure the action of their benefactor. Such, however, need not be the case. If the change made by the Committee is resented on pure constitutional grounds, even men who may take advantage of the benefit conferred may still very properly condemn the unconstitutional action of the Committee. They may admit the advisability of the change but repudiate the right of All-India Congress Committee to make it under any circumstance whatsoever.

[1] *Vide* Appendix II.

As to the substance of the change made, there is really nothing drastic in it. No interest is injured. No single person is disfranchised. No single party is in a worse position than it was before the change. Non-co-operators need not complain, because non-co-operation as a national policy has been suspended. The constructive programme remains unaffected. Hand-spinning and khaddar still remain part of the national programme. The Council programme which was being worked by the Swaraj Party in the name of the Congress will now be worked by the Congress through the Swaraj Party. This may be called a distinction without a difference. Those who put spinning before the political programme and those who believe in spinning to the exclusion of any political programme strictly so called are not injured because they have a separate organization for its development and because hand-spinning still remains as an alternative part of the franchise and the use of khaddar on Congress and other public occasions still remains obligatory. Nor are the other parties who are outside the Congress adversely affected by it. Whereas under the Belgaum resolution[1] they had to convert or negotiate with both No-changers and Swarajists, now they have only to convert or confer with the Swarajists. The change therefore in every respect extends the right of representation and makes the union of all the parties less difficult than it was. No Congress can possibly resent a change in extension of popular liberty. What is more, the change in my opinion, is in accordance with the requirements of those who have hitherto been identified with the Congress. For them, perhaps, it does not go far enough. I should be sorry if such is the fact.

The discussion at the meeting betrayed on the part of some members a fear that the delivery of the yarn subscription directly to the All-India Spinners' Association might result in an unscrupulous exploitation of professional spinners or, worse still, in dishonest practices to flood the Congress, thus bringing about an undesirable state of things and defeating the very end sought to be accomplished by the resolution. This fear was felt not if the yarn was to be delivered at the centre, but if it was to be delivered to the provincial agencies. There was no difficulty in meeting this objection. The clause in the constitution of the Association requiring Congress members who wanted to spin rather than pay a four-anna subscription to send their yarn to the central offices was inserted to meet this difficulty. My own view is certainly

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXV.

not to flood the Congress with spinners and thus to convert it once more into a purely or predominantly spinners' organization to the exclusion of Council policies. I would like it to be so undoubtedly, but that can only happen when those to whom the transfer has been made become converted to spinning out and out. And that can only happen by the spinners' action not within the Congress but without it. If hand-spinning has any intrinsic vitality and becomes so universal as to bring us within a measurable distance of excluding foreign cloth—and that can happen only by incessant and exclusive effort on the part of those who believe in spinning out and out, working out their belief in practice—the Swarajists will become complete converts. My strong advice, therefore, is that those who are at present spinning members of the Congress may, if they wish, continue to be so by sending their yarn to the central office. No canvassing need be made by them for increasing the strength of membership through hand-spinning. They may work to the utmost of their ability to enrol as many members of the Association as possible. And if we can get a large number of voluntary spinners drawn not from the professional class, but from those who spin purely for sacrifice and not for livelihood, it would be an achievement that cannot but tell. But, at the present moment, and up to the time that all suspicion is set at rest, they should refrain from becoming members of the Congress. I have always held that the National Congress should have no wrangling within its ranks and that there should be no unseemly attempt to capture the Congress. Those who cannot see eye to eye with the policy of the majority should either refrain from fighting to the division point in vital matters, or if their conscience would not allow it they should for the time being retire altogether from the Congress. I will, therefore, urge the fierce Non-co-operators, who if they remain in the Congress would consider it their duty to fight the Swarajists at every step and stage, to retire from the Congress, and build up public opinion if they so will, from without. They must leave the Swarajists an open field and give them the best opportunity of working out their policy. In my opinion, if they are to create an impression upon the Government they must have the Congress organization undisturbed by Non-co-operators.

Hence, in my opinion, wherever the two parties are evenly balanced, Non-co-operators or No-changers should surrender full control to the Swarajists and voluntarily give up offices if they hold any. Where the No-changers are in an overwhelming majority, they should not hamper the Swarajists, and should help them

wherever they conscientiously can. In no case may any Congress Committee put up for the Legislatures candidates that are not selected by the Swarajists or are in opposition to them.

One pleasing thing I must not omit to note. There was a decided inclination on the part of the majority to make khaddar wear the National dress for all Congressmen. The motion to that end was not pressed only when it became clear that it would embarrass the Swaraj Party. But an improvement upon the Belgaum resolution was heartily accepted to the effect that whilst khaddar was obligatory on Congress and other public occasions it was expected of all Congressmen to wear khaddar on all the occasions, but in no case shall they wear or use foreign cloth.

Young India, 1-10-1925

152. TO VOLUNTARY SPINNERS

The Secretaries ask me to draw the attention of voluntary spinners to the following:

> Every person wishing to join the Association shall apply in the following form:
>
> TO
> THE SECRETARY,
> ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION,
> SABARMATI
>
> DEAR SIR,
>
> I have read the rules of the A.I.S.A. I desire to become a member of class/an associate member and I forward herewith my subscription for . . . .
>
> Please enrol me as a member.
>
> *Yours faithfully,*

2. The yarn must be sent direct to Sabarmati.
3. A slip containing the following particulars of information should be attached to the yarn:
   i. Name and address of the member, denoting Congress province and taluqa.
   ii. Month of subscription.
   iii. (a) Length of yarn.
        (b) Weight of yarn.
        (c) Count of yarn.

(d) Size of hank.
(e) Kind of cotton used.

Those two hundred who gave their names at the inauguration meeting of the Association please note.

Young India, 1-10-1925

153. SIKHISM

During his visit to Patna for the A.I.C.C., Sardar Mangal Singh drew my attention to an article in *Young India* entitled "My friend, the revolutionary" in the issue dated 9th April last.[1] He told me that many Sikh friends were offended because they thought I have described Guru Govind Singh as a misguided patriot whereas I had glorified Krishna. The Sardarji asked me to take an early opportunity of explaining what I meant by the passages he drew my attention to. The careful reader will note that my language is most guarded. I have made no positive assertion. All that I have said is that believing every statement made about the heroes mentioned including Guru Govind Singh to be true, had I lived as their contemporary I would have called every one of them a misguided patriot. But, in the very next sentence, I have hastened to add that I must not judge them and that I disbelieve history as far as the details of the acts of the heroes are concerned. My belief about the Sikh Gurus is that they were all deeply religious teachers and reformers, that they were all Hindus and that Guru Govind Singh was one of the greatest defenders of Hinduism. I believe, too, that he drew the sword in its defence. But I cannot judge his actions, nor can I use him as my model so far as his resort to the sword is concerned. What I would have done had I lived in his times and held the same views that I hold now I do not know. Such speculation I regard as perfect waste of time. I do not regard Sikhism as a religion distinct from Hinduism. I regard it as part of Hinduism and the reformation in the same sense that *Vaishnavism* is. I read in the Yeravda Prison all the writings that I could lay my hands upon regarding the Sikhs. I read portions of Granth Saheb. Its deeply spiritual and moral tone I found to be uplifting. In the collection of hymns we have at the Asram, we have some of Guru Nanak's also. At the same time, I do not quarrel with the Sikhs for considering, if they wish, Sikhism

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVI, pp. 486-92.

as totally distinct from Hinduism. And when during my first visit to the Punjab, a few Sikh friends told me that my reference to Sikhism as part of Hinduism displeased them, I ceased to refer to it as such. But the Sikh friends will pardon me for avowing my belief when I am asked to express my opinion about Sikhism.

Now about Krishna. Whilst I have dealt with the Gurus as historical personages about whose existence we have trustworthy records, I have no knowledge that the Krishna of the *Mahabharata* ever lived. My Krishna has nothing to do with any historical person. I would refuse to bow my head to the Krishna who would kill because his pride is hurt, or the Krishna whom non-Hindus portray as a dissolute youth. I believe in Krishna of my imagination as a perfect incarnation, spotless in every sense of the word, the inspirer of the *Gita* and the inspirer of the lives of millions of human beings. But if it was proved to me that the *Mahabharata* is history in the same sense that modern historical books are, that every word of the *Mahabharata* is authentic and that the Krishna of the *Mahabharata* actually did some of the acts attributed to him, even at the risk of being banished from the Hindu fold, I should not hesitate to reject that Krishna as God incarnate. But to me the *Mahabharata* is a profoundly religious book, largely allegorical, in no way meant to be a historical record. It is the description of the eternal duel going on within ourselves, given so vividly as to make us think, for the time being that the deeds described therein were actually done by the human beings. Nor do I regard the *Mahabharata* as we have it now as a faultless copy of the original. On the contrary I consider that it has undergone many emendations.

Young India, 1-10-1925

154. *ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION*

The reader will see printed elsewhere the constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association. A careful study of it will show that it is, at the present moment, not only not a democratic institution but that, in effect, it is a one man's show. It may represent either the arrogance of the person who calls into being such an institution or his absolute faith in the cause and in himself. So far as a man can be aware of himself, I know that there is no arrogance in giving an autocratic character to the Association. Commercial bodies can never be democratic. And if hand-spinning is to become universal and successful in the country,

its non-political and purely economical side must be now fully developed. That development is sought to be attained by the All-India Spinners' Association.

In choosing my colleagues in the Association, I have been guided by the sole consideration of utility. Each one has been selected for his special qualification. In making the selection there was no question of representation of different provinces. And some of the best workers have been left out of the Council because of the possibility of misunderstandings. What special qualification from the spinners' standpoint has Maulana Shaukat Ali, it may be asked. The special qualification that he has is that he is a Mussalman, a pukka believer in khadi, wants to spin one thousand yards every month and to do all he can for the charkha and khaddar. I have purposely omitted active Swarajists because, for obvious reasons, they cannot give their time predominantly to khaddar.

At the time of the formation of the Association at which I was assisted by over one hundred khaddar lovers, including Swarajists, I was asked whether I had ceased to believe in the political importance of khadi or of its ability to produce an atmosphere for civil resistance. My answer was an emphatic 'no'. The political importance of khaddar consists in its economic capacity. A people that are starving for want of occupation can have no political consciousness. Khaddar will have no political importance in a country where no cloth is needed and where people live on hunting, or in a country where people live on exploitation of peoples belonging to other countries. The political importance of khaddar in India is derived from her peculiar condition in that it needs cloth, it exploits no other country, and its millions have nothing to do for four months in the year, though they are starving. The ability of khaddar to give an atmosphere of civil resistance consists in its ability, if successful, of making us conscious of some power within us and its ability to produce an atmosphere of calmness, and yet fixed determination behind that calmness. Many people who have civil resistance on their lips have still little notion of what it means. They mix it up with an atmosphere of intense excitement, ready at any moment to develop into actual violence, whereas civil resistance is the very opposite of it. And neither the political result nor the calm atmosphere are possible without khadi becoming an economic success. Hence it is necessary to emphasize its paramount and economic aspect which is also its direct result. The preamble, therefore, is deli-

berate and vital. The fiercest politician and the fiercest civil resister may join the Association, but he does so as an economic worker. No maharaja need shun the Association if he admits the great economic value of khadi and the paramount necessity of finding a proper supplementary employment for the starving millions of India. I, therefore, venture to invite all those who believe in khadi and the spinning-wheel to join the Association irrespective of their politics and irrespective of race or creed. I would invite Englishmen and other Europeans who are mindful of the welfare of the starving millions of India to join the Association. I know that there are many who believe in khadi, who believe in hand-spinning, but will not spin themselves. Let them become Associates, if they will wear khadi. There are yet others who for some reason or other will not even wear khadi and yet want khadi to make all the progress it can. Let them support the Association with their donations.

Let there be, however, no mistake that so long as it pleases the Congress to allow it, the Association will remain an integral part of the Congress organization. As such it will be its duty to render all the assistance it can to the Congress in its programme of hand-spinning and khadi. The connecting link between the Congress and the Association is thus a common faith in the spinning-wheel and khadi. The Association as such will not concern itself or be in any way affected by the varying politics of the Congress. Its existence will be independent, its object merely confined to the propagation of the spinning-wheel and khadi, and it will be governed by its own separate constitution, so much so that it has adopted a different franchise and it can take in, as I have already said, non-congressmen as members and no Congressman, not even a spinning member, is bound to become a member of the Association.

The constitution is not as rigid as I had at first intended. The drafts circulated by me required two thousand yards of yarn per month for membership of A class; and a declaration to the following effect was intended to be required from such members: "It is my firm belief that the economic salvation of the masses of India is impossible without the universal adoption by the country of the spinning-wheel and its product khaddar. I shall, therefore, except when disabled by illness or some unforeseen event, spin daily, for at least half an hour and habitually wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, and in the event of my belief undergoing a change, or my ceasing to spin or wear khaddar, I shall resign the membership of this Association."

The two thousand yards were reduced to one thousand because a strenuous fight was put up on behalf of those who wanted to become A class members and yet found it difficult to give 2,000 yards per month. The declaration itself was dropped because the very idea of a solemn undertaking seemed to be repugnant, I still think quite wrongly, to others. My own opinion and that of many others is that promises or vows are necessary for the strongest of us. A promise is like a right angle not nearly but exactly of 90°. The slightest deflection makes it useless for the grand purpose that the right angle serves. A voluntary promise is like a plumb line keeping a man straight and warning him when he is going wrong. Rules of general application do not serve the same purpose as an individual vow. We find therefore the system of declarations followed in all large and well conducted institutions. The Viceroy has to take the oath of office. Members of Legislatures have to do likewise all the world over, and in my opinion rightly so. A soldier joining an army has to do likewise. Moreover, a written undertaking reminds one of what one has promised to do. Memory is a very frail thing. The written word stands for ever. But as there was fairly strong opposition to the retention of declarations, I felt that I should waive them as it was common ground among all that, whilst the declaration might not be taken as a matter of fact, the belief affirmed in the declaration was and should be the belief of every member and that every member was expected to spin at least for half an hour daily except when unavoidably prevented from doing so. There was an additional clause to the declaration to be made by members of the Council, and it was this:

"I promise faithfully to discharge the obligations of my office as member of the Council of the Association and give preference to the furtherance of its objects over all other work, public or private, that I might undertake."

It was suggested that whilst the declaration should not be taken, the promise of faithful discharge of obligations of office must be an understood thing in an Association whose Council was necessarily to consist of whole-timers. Indeed, the holding of office in the Council is all duty and no right. And where it is all service and no certificate save that of one's own conscience, all can take part in it whether they hold office or not. I hope therefore that no omission will be resented or misunderstood. On the contrary I am hoping that all the khadi workers, who had any new or important idea, or special talent for serving, will not fail to give the Association the benefit of his or her idea or talent.

If its activity is to succeed, it will need all the assistance that the lowliest among us can give.

Young India, 1-10-1925

155. NOTES

My Apologies

It is a matter of deep regret that I had to be party to the postponement of the rest of my tour in Bihar. But I was helpless. I saw that my health was becoming gradually undermined by the incessant travelling which I have been doing since the fast[1] of last year. There seems to be nothing organically wrong with me. Only my tired limbs need some rest. Babu Rajendra Prasad observed my dilapidated condition and observed also that I was ill able to stand the shouts of thousands of men, however lovingly meant they were. He has, therefore, absolved me from the tour beyond 15th October, and the revised programme even up to that date has been made so light as to give me ample rest every day and leave me two clear days per week for my editing. The U.P. friends have been equally indulgent and obliging and will be satisfied with only two days in the U.P. The Maharashtrian khaddar lovers have absolved me from my promise to visit some parts of Maharashtra during November. And I am to finish this year's travelling with an easy fortnight in Cutch. The Cutch friends are insistent that I should visit them during October. But they promise to make my tour in Cutch noiseless and thoroughly restful and they have dangled before me a fat purse for the advancement of hand-spinning, spinning-wheel and khaddar. I thank all those who have been so kind and considerate to me. I expect the Cutch friends to be true to their promise. To those provinces who have been indulgent to me I promise that I will visit them if they still wish me to do so next year. The programme can be fixed by mutual consultation at Cawnpore.

Remember 11th October

I draw the attention of Congress organizations and other public bodies to the following resolution of the A.I.C.C.

> The All-India Congress Committee expresses its deep sympathy with the Indian settlers in South Africa in their troubles and assures them of

[1] The twenty-one days' fast from September 18 to October 8, 1924, undertaken as a penance for communal riots; *vide* Vol. XXV, pp. 171-2.

> all the support that it is within the power of the Congress to give them to maintain their position and self-respect in South Africa. In the opinion of the All-India Congress Committee, India should not become a party to any scheme of repatriation whether described as voluntary or compulsory. The Congress is further of opinion that the Bill proposed to be passed by the Union Parliament is manifestly in breach of the settlement of 1914.[1] The A.I.C.C. suggests to the Congress organizations to call public meetings of all parties on the eleventh day of October 1925 to protest against the treatment meted out to the Indian settlers in South Africa.

If these meetings to be held all over India are to become a success, all parties including Chambers of Commerce, European and Anglo-Indian Associations, missionary bodies, etc., should co-operate whole-heartedly, as I hope they will. There is no division of opinion on this one point. And I believe that the Government of India will welcome an emphatic and unanimous expression of public opinion.

Poor on 14 Lacs

A friend writes:

> You are reported to claim to be a sannyasi and yet to have taken scrupulous care to have provided yourself with handsome living for yourself and your dependents and that you have made to that end a trust of your estate which is worth fourteen lacs and that you are leading a very easy and comfortable life. Some of us were staggered to hear this. Will you kindly enlighten the public on the point? I myself refuse to believe the report.

If this query had not come from an honest friend whom I know, I would have taken no notice of it, especially as some months ago, in answer to a question about my personal expenses, I have dealt with my private affairs. I never had 14 lacs of rupees which I could call my own. What I did have I had certainly reduced to a trust when I renounced all property. But it was a trust for public purposes. I retained for myself nothing out of that trust. But I have never described myself as a sannyasi. Sannyas is made of sterner stuff, I regard myself as a householder, leading a humble life of service and, in common with my fellow-workers, living upon the charity of friends who defray the expenses of Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati of which I am one of the founders. The life I am living is certainly very easy and very

[1] *Vide* Vol. XII, p. 330.

comfortable, if ease and comfort are a mental state. I have all I need without the slightest care of having to keep any personal treasures. Mine is a life full of joy in the midst of incessant work. In not wanting to think of what tomorrow will bring for me I feel as free as a bird. Indeed at the present moment I may even be described to be living a life of luxury. An English lady, the other day, came to me whilst the train was standing at Gaya station and said, "How is it I see you travelling so comfortably in a second-class compartment surrounded by so many people when I expected to find you in a crowded third-class compartment? Have you not said that you want to live like the poor? Do you suppose poor people can afford the luxury of second-class travelling? Is not your practice inconsistent with your profession?" I straightway pleaded guilty and did not care to inform this fair inquirer that my body had become too dilapidated to bear the fatigue of incessant third-class travelling. I feel that the weakness of the body could not be pleaded as an excuse. I am painfully aware of the fact that there are tens of thousands of men and women much weaker in body that travel third class because they have no friends to provide them with second-class travelling expenses. There was, undoubtedly, an inconsistency between my practice and profession of identification with the poor. Such is the tragedy of life and yet, in the midst of it, I refuse to part with my joy. The thought that I am ceaselessly and honestly struggling against the requirements of the flesh sustains me in spite of the contradiction that the good lady could not fail to see.

Effect of the Wheel

A correspondent who, being a State servant, is not a Congress member but who is a believer in the mission of the charkha and who therefore spins regularly, writes:

> From what little experience I have had with the charkha (something like 150 hours during the last seven months), I feel that any revival of the charkha is impossible unless men have taken to it and set an example to their womenfolk in the matter of producing fine, well-twisted, weavable yarn. I also feel that highly undisciplined as we are, the charkha is sure to impart a wholesome discipline and infuse a sense of responsibility in our irresponsible dispositions.

He is not the only one who has found the wheel to impart to the spinner a spirit of discipline. And who that is engaged in a spinning propaganda will fail to endorse the statement that if women are to spin, men must not only set the example but

teach the women the technique of the art. All the small but important improvements that have been made in the charkha are due solely to the efforts of the devoted educated men who are working at it selflessly and regularly.

Cow-Protection Supplement

The reader will find circulated with this number a supplement of *Young India* printed not by me but by the Ghatkopar Humanitarian Association and printed too without my permission but in anticipation of it. The Association has undergone considerable expense in having the pamphlet printed. Had they asked for my permission before printing, I would have declined to circulate the pamphlet which contains the accounts and reports of the Association. I cannot afford to circulate to the readers of *Young India* such things however admirable they may be in themselves unless I would change the character of this journal. But it contains some valuable reading matter for lovers of the cow. The mistake of putting in such readable matter in the midst of the accounts and appeals for funds is due to excessive zeal. I know that my permission has been anticipated for the purpose of disseminating among the readers a plea for the protection of our fellow-creatures, the lower animals, written by a friend whose learning and love of humanity I prize. He is, like me, an idealist. But if I had been given the choice of revising his article I would have toned it down, though I believe his argument to be convincing. I regard myself as a practical reförmer confining my attention to things that are, humanly speaking, possible. I would therefore have boiled down the paper to the reproduction of the valuable statistics given in it, the informative report of the Municipal Commissioner of Bombay on the criminal waste of cattle life in that city miscalled "the beautiful" and the terrible extract from the report of Dr. Mann describing the condition of the stables of Bombay. I commend to the attention of the reader all these things in the so-called supplement to *Young India*. Let him read pages 2 and 6 to 10 at least and excuse the overzeal of the energetic Secretary of the Ghatkopar Humanitarian Association. If he reads the whole of the supplement, he will find that the Association is doing good work in the face of difficulties due to apathy and ignorance. For the indifferent or the very busy reader I collect a few startling facts. During the twelve months ending 31st March 1924, 90,314 cattle were slaughtered in Calcutta, 58,154 in Bandra (Bombay), 14,128 in Ahmedabad, 29,565 in Delhi. This is all a terrific eonomic waste. The slaughter is preventable

not by any sentimental appeal to the Mussalmans or Christians or any others. It is preventable by an intelligent application of the funds that are being today wasted throughout the length and breadth of India in the name of cow-protection by men who have hearts full of love for all life but who do not know how to save it. I am convinced that the establishment of dairies and tanneries not for profit but for saving cattle life is the only solution for preventing the wanton destruction of precious life. Religious sentiment that takes no note of hard economic facts or that is built up on prejudice is worse than useless. Religious sentiment allied to reason and practical knowledge becomes irresistible. Cattle life, if it is to be saved, must be too expensive to take. No religious sentiment will save it so long as it remains profitable to kill it, as it is in India at the present moment.

Young India, 1-10-1925

156. *SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHAGALPUR*[1]

October 1, 1925

MR. PRESIDENT AND MY HINDU AND MUSLIM BRETHREN,

I am grateful to you for the addresses you have given me. I want to tell you that the fact that I have got the opportunity to come over to you has greatly increased my pleasure.

I perfectly remember the last time I came over here, some 4 or 5 years ago. What difference do I mark in the situation of then and now? You have referred to the Hindu-Muslim question in one of the addresses. I would like to say something about this question to my Hindu and Muslim brethren. But I regard myself to be a sensible man. I know my limitations well. I have fully realized that I have no longer that influence which I commanded over the Hindus and the Mohammedans in 1921. Today I can persuade neither the Hindus nor the Mohammedans. I know it full well that any good result can come out only when both rid themselves of their madness. Call it God or Khuda, there is a force before which our heads always bow. We ought to fear Him and determine our duty through that fear. There is no reason whatsoever to justify the Hindus and the Mussalmans to fight one another. I see neither religious grievance nor

[1] Gandhiji was replying in Hindi to addresses of welcome presented by the Municipality and the District Board of Bhagalpur.

any other justification for the fight. It is our madness alone which is responsible for it. If we want to get rid of this ignorance and become men, we must give up our pride and in fear of God purify our hearts and again try to unite and become one.

Man wants one thing and God may want another. What do we know of the purpose which He wants to fulfil by making our hearts so bad? God's work only He knows. On being asked about it by a few Mussalman friends who are genuinely and really anxious to settle this quarrel, I have advised them to do exactly as some Mussalmans of the time of the first four Caliphs did? What is to be done when two brothers fight among themselves? Misunderstanding is created, God is forgotten and they are at daggers drawn to cut one another's throat. We should treat this case as the one just described, and do what the noble Mussalmans of those days did. I have this advice for both the Hindus and the Mussalmans—that those Hindus who do not hate the Muslims and have regard for the Koran and those Mussalmans who have no enmity with the Hindus and respect the *Gita* as well should bring themselves into the depth of their own hearts. Now the days are no more when one used to seek refuge in the caves of Egypt or the jungles of the Himalayas. Even there one can get no peace now. He will be followed by the electric light, and even if that does not happen, the airships will be there to disturb him. In these days we have access to only one cave. We are to sit in that cave of our hearts and pray to God: "Keep at least my heart pure." When the quarrelling brothers are cured of their madness, the cave-dwellers will be requisitioned for service. May God bless the whole nation and all those who have kept aloof from these quarrels! Not only these two communities but all classes living in India, men of all provinces, may live together as brothers and sisters. They may regard others' women as their own mothers and sisters. I would like every Mussalman to know that it is only they who are mad who think of saving Islam by the help of the sword only. And to those Hindus also who want to save Hinduism by the help of the sword my message is that, if you want to draw your swords, draw them by all means, but for the sake of God do not call in a third party to arbitrate. You want to escape from one another and it is because of this that you recognize the necessity of the existence of a third party. So, I have thought it fit to bring myself into my own heart. I am no more going to fast for Hindu-Muslim quarrels. All that was possible for a man to do I have tried. Now I pray to God for more knowledge. I believe that in due time the Hindus and the Mussal-

mans will come round, but let those fight who want to. Let all Hindus and Mussalmans who like to draw their swords against one another, draw them, but it would have been much better if they had taken to the practice of non-violence as a religious duty. I have understood non-violence only after having fully known what violence is. I have said this many a time and I do it now again —better commit violence than sit helplessly in the name of non-violence. To the coward I shall not be able to deliver my message of non-violence. Him I shall not be able to teach the lesson of peacefulness; I will be able to give the lesson of peace, the lesson of non-violence, only to those who do not fear to die, who are not afraid of their opponents. Maulana Shaukat Ali once told me that he and his brother had not lost their senses when they accepted non-violence as a policy. They did so because they knew that the non-violence that I suggested required the use of all the bravery that they possessed. They knew that in non-violence also it was necessary to know and practise the art of dying and they were prepared to die happily if occasion arose for it. But they felt that, if they died with their swords drawn, they would be committing suicide, but as they wanted to die in the service of the country and Islam, they would have to die without drawing blood.

Whenever I see cowardice and fear, I ask people to draw the sword. The inhabitants of a neighbouring village told me, when I went to Bettiah in 1921, that the policemen molested their women and looted their houses and whilst the police were doing this, they had run away. When I asked them the reason for it, they at once told me that their running away was due to my teaching of non-violence. I felt then that if the earth could have given me place, it would have been better for me to have buried myself therein. Had I ever given the lesson never to draw the sword in any case? If one could not die without drawing blood, one must retaliate and die in the protection of one's property and honour. I had told them to die long before anybody could touch their wives and if they could not die without retaliation, they were to take their swords in their hands and die before anybody could reach their women. They were to teach their women also to protect their own honour, to die before anybody could lay his hands upon their body. One who knows how to die becomes free for ever. The sword becomes a worthless weapon for him. The swordsman loses all his strength with the destruction of his sword, but one who knows the science of dying without injuring the wrongdoer dies while doing his work. His weapon knows no destruction. But what am I to say to them who leave their women to their fate

and fly away? Such a man is worse than a mere animal? It would be much better if he at least fought with sword in hand, but a coward would not use even the sword. For his protection he will go to the Government, he will engage the *gundas* and what not. What am I to say to such men? I know only one lesson and I am trying to teach it to India and want the world also to learn it. If you do not learn it, I do not know what is going to happen. To-day the crores of India cannot use the sword and I do not see the time coming in the near future when they will be able to do so. I do not know if such a day is going to come even in a hundred years, but this much I know full well that if India wanted, it could be free even now. The sum and substance of all that I have said is this that I have lost all influence over both the Hindus and the Mussalmans and therefore my remedy may be taken to be a useless one and those who want to fight may fight to their satisfaction. But I have no remedy for one who flies away in fear.

Now comes the question of khadi. This business is one in which everybody can take part. But even if the whole country were to give up khadi, I at least am not going to throw away my charkha. You say that you have not been able to do much khadi work. One of the reasons you put forward for this is the legal powers. This is true. There are legal difficulties no doubt, but I am going to ask this whole assembly and the members of the Municipality and the District Board if there is any law prohibiting them personally to wear khadi. But if the absence of fine khadi is one of the obstacles in your way of using it, then you should spin fine yarn yourself and get that woven into fine khadi and that khadi you are to use. In the name of God, for the sake of your poor countrymen, please spin and use coarse cloth as well. That will not do you any harm.

You say that khadi is sold at a high price and you want to practise economy. I will then ask you to shorten your dhoti of 6 yards in length and 44 to 50 inches in breadth, if you have the best love for India. Better use dhotis only three yards long. If anybody ever wants to know the reason for it, tell him what I am used to say to such men. You are to tell him that you are using short clothes for the sake of India. We are poor people, we cannot afford to buy long khadi dhotis and so we use only half dhotis. A shirt cannot be halved, but this also can be easily shortened. The same money which you spend on foreign cloth may be very usefully employed in covering the naked bodies of a few of the poor sisters. Today in Bihar, you have got unsold khadi worth one lakh, the whole of which if sold could go to the poor sisters of Bihar.

When our sisters spin khadi is woven out of their yarn and we give them some break by purchasing that khadi. If you want to serve India in the least, if you all want to ameliorate the suffering of your brothers and sisters, if you want to make khaddar cheap, then you must wear it.

Maulana Shaukat Ali has asked me to say everywhere, where I meet Mussalmans, that he had joined the Spinners' Association. He has got unlimited faith in the charkha because he knows that, so long as both the Hindus and Mussalmans are not wholly clad in khaddar, India cannot be free. Therefore, he has promised to give me three thousand 'A' Class Mussalman members of the A.I.S.A. within this very year. Only they can be 'A' Class members of the A.I.S.A. who contribute to it one thousand yards of self-spun yarn per month—in all, twelve thousand yards in the year—and are habitual wearers of khadi. The Maulana hopes that he will be able to bring round three thousand members from among the Mussalmans before the year closes. It has been complained that, whereas there are many Hindus in the khadi service, there are but few Mussalmans. Therefore, the Maulana wants me to declare this also that all such Mussalmans whose hearts are pure and who are industrious had got their place in it. But they who want to come into it must obey its laws. Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis, Jews and all have their place in this A.I.S.A., if they believe in khadi.

To the Hindus I want to say something about untouchability. If you want to do some real service, and want to save your Hindu dharma, you must remove this. If you fail to get rid of this, be sure that Hinduism itself will be rid of you. That religion cannot be a holy religion in which hatred is taught against even one man. Let a man be a very great criminal; the least you can do is to reform him and not to hate him. Where is the justification for hating the untouchables who are servants of the country? Let us think it to be no sin to touch them. Let us not fly from them. To those who claim to be *sanatani* Hindus, I say that the religion of untouchability, as it is understood today, is not to be found in any of the Vedas or the Shastras. Ramachandra had no scruples in touching Guharaj. He embraced Guharaj, drank water from his hands. Bharatji went so far as to bow to Guharaj.

You have referred to liquor also. Truly, we had reduced it to a very great extent in 1921, rather we had almost given it up, but our boat has now drifted away from the shore. I know the then picketers used sometimes even violence. Had violence not

been used, perhaps, this picketing also would not have been discontinued. But even today you had better do what little you can do in this direction and induce others to give up this habit. In the same way, you are to give up smoking, taking *ganja*, bhang and other intoxicants.

The Searchlight, 16-10-1925

157. SPEECH AT MARWARI AGARWAL SABHA, BHAGALPUR

October 1, 1925

In reply to an address presented to him on behalf of the Marwari community at the first session of the Marwari Agarwal Sabha that held its sittings at Bhagalpur the other day, Mahatmaji said that when it was found that it was physically impossible for him to complete the Bihar tour, the question arose as to where he should go and where not and when that was being considered, he had told Rajendra Babu not to exclude Bhagalpur from his shortened tour, because he had already received their telegram at Ranchi inviting him to the place and also because his self-interest also lay in visiting that place. He thought that the moment he went to them he would be able to get something from them. He had still some value left, although he had ceased to be a practising lawyer long ago. That was why wherever he went he made the people of the place do some work. Of the people of Bhagalpur, he expected both: he wanted to make them work as well as to get as much money from them as possible, if they were prepared to give him. Proceeding, he said:

What should I say of the address that you have presented to me? It would be a mere commonplace to say that I am grateful to you for it. What I expect of those who present any address to me is that they should act and mould their conduct in accordance with the sentiments and the ideals expressed in the address. That will give me real pleasure indeed. A time comes when one becomes sick of hearing one's praise and I stand before you as the living illustration of it. I can well fancy that one's own praise might be agreeable to a certain extent, but whether it is always so I cannot say. My own experience for the last 40 years is that my own praise has never been pleasing to me. But even to those who do like to hear their praise, a time comes when they feel sick of it. I for one am not prepared to lose my sleep simply for the sake of hearing myself praised and you will, therefore, have to do some work in accordance with what you have said in the address.

under the circumstances, that what they are doing today is right and that it shall be followed in future as well. When influential men in society go wrong, when out of ignorance or malice they want to boycott a certain man, then it is his duty, he who does not agree with them, to allow himself to be boycotted by them. We have been obsessed by self-interest, for which I do not find any justification. I see before my own eyes the debauchee and the rake with whose sins we are fully familiar, yet they are never boycotted by society. There are the drunkards and the meat-eaters and they are in society. But as soon as you touch an untouchable, regarding it as your dharma, you are immediately boycotted. This is nothing but sheer high-handedness and is sure to lead society to ruin. Boycott has a science and method of its own. I do not propose to take your time in discussing the details of it.

But I would ask men of status and influence not to take recourse to it all on a sudden, without any thought. You must be sympathetic to him who attempts to reform the community in any particular direction. Do not destroy the Hindu dharma which we want to protect. In future, there is to be an intermixture of various communities. I would beg of you to give up this weapon of boycott for it is of no value so long as there reign supreme all sorts of corruption and sins among us and so long as we have not developed self-restraint and self-discipline among ourselves.

Proceeding, Mahatmaji said that *varnashrama* was one thing and the existence of several smaller castes was quite a different thing.

Members of one caste living in different provinces, far away from one another, and following different vocations in life have become strangers to each other. This is narrow-mindedness. Your Sammelan is dear to me so long as it continues to minister to the good of the community. There can only be one community of Brahmins. Why cannot a Gujarati Brahmin give away his daughter in marriage to a Bengali or a Marwari Brahmin? Why should one contracting such a relation be boycotted by society? Your Shastras do not lay down any injunction that a Vaisya of Gujarat should not contract any relationship with a Vaisya of any other province. The Marwari community would soon be swept out of existence if the interrelations between the different classes of Marwaris be regarded as *adharma*. The sham and the unreal hold the field today. If you want to recognize the *varnashrama* dharma, you will have to give the go-by to all these. If bigger folks are

obsessed with the pride of self-importance, it is for the workers to go on with their business undaunted by anything. It matters not if they are boycotted, if they are deprived of the services of a barber or a dhobi or a domestic servant and suffer consequently. Things have, indeed, come to such a pass in Gujarat. The gentleman I have referred to above writes to me to say that he gets neither the services of a barber nor a dhobi nor does he get anyone to fetch water for him. And in reply I have told him that he should better die of thirst and hunger than swerve even an inch from the path which he thinks it his duty to follow. If the bigger folks would forsake their path of righteousness and boycott you, your duty is simply to act with such wisdom and undergo humiliation with such calmness and courage as may ultimately make them yield to you. When Prahlad's father boycotted his son, he could never silence him or make him inactive. Prahlad taught his classmates to utter the name of Rama and he thus civilly disobeyed his father. The same may be done by a member of a particular community towards his own community.

Mahatmaji proceeding dwelt upon the problem of child-widow remarriage and said that at first he thought that a society could tolerate a child-widow to the extent of even 10 to 20 thousand in number. But under the present state of affairs something would have to be done to bring about reforms in this direction as well. He said:

At first I thought that the problem could be solved if the widower also did not remarry. But nobody agrees to it. In fact, some people begin settling their remarriage even at the burning-ghat. The fathers of some of the brides betrothed their daughters by telegram and it matters not if the age of the bridegroom be even 45 and that of the bride only 12.

Therefore under the present state of affairs I have come to the conclusion that child-widows will have to be remarried. If it is not done, the result will be that cases of suicide, as have happened in Bengal and Delhi, would go on increasing. We have no right perforce to keep these child-widows always in that state. Our duty, our dharma, tells us to remarry such widows. A certain sister of mine asked me if I would help her in raising the marriageable age of girls to 14 years. I would tell her that not to speak of 14, I would not marry a girl even at the age of 16.

I have also some girls under my control and I also know fathers of some girls who do hear me and I have been able to persuade them not to entertain any proposal or ever have any talk about early marriage of their wards. It is for us to teach our

wards to have pure thoughts and not to corrupt their minds by talking about their marriages. I want to make the mothers of these girls Sitas of yore. How is that to be done? Sita could withstand the fire-test so well. She entered the fire but came out absolutely unscathed. How we wish there were reborn ladies of such great eminence amongst us! But how can we expect it to be so, if from their very childhood we make our girls imbibe bad ideas. One who has been able to realize the importance of this reform will be prepared to undergo any sacrifice for its sake. Even in Western countries, where indulgence predominates and which are not noted for renunciation, there are to be found women even today whose hearts are pure and uncontaminated. I had such a girl[1] with me in South Africa who served thousands of men, who carried on the entire work of satyagraha in the Transvaal when I, along with my other fellow-workers, was sent to jail. She came in contact, then, with thousands of people, but none could cast an evil eye on her.

There was also an Indian lady with me there, but she could not do that work. She went to jail but, she would not have been able to do even that, had I not deprived her of all her ornaments. One must have a right to go to jail and she alone has that right who has given up her ornaments.

Now, I shall tell you of my own pet subject. You have referred to khadi in your address. I have thought very deeply on the subject and it is only after considerable meditation that I have come to this conclusion and taken to the work of khadi. I know I shall not be able to achieve all I want in this life.

The next point dwelt upon by Mahatmaji was the subject of cow-protection. He said:

If we want to protect the cows we can do so only by looking at the problem as I do, not by fighting the Mussalmans or the Englishmen or by begging favours of them. Begging without resolve would be absolutely useless. I am compiling today a statement showing the number of cattle for the loss of which we ourselves are responsible. The *gwalas* (milkmen) are our own men—they are Hindus. But it is they who sell their cattle to the butchers. Marwaris are also our men and they also export their cows and oxen to other places. Some of these exported cattle are butchered in the slaughter-houses of Bombay and Calcutta and some are sent out to Australia from where their meat is exported

[1] Sonja Schlesin, *vide* Vol. XI, p. 12.

to this country as tinned beef. The way to prevent this is by taking upon ourselves the responsibility of supplying milk and leather. And the responsibility for all this rests on our shoulders. I know well how chamars in some native States poison their cattle. In a certain native State, I understand, they are given contracts at the rate of per thousand of dead animals. This is not right. It would be better if the rate be not per thousand but per one single dead animal. I do not like that the chamars should take the meat of dead animals. When I ask them to give up this habit, they tell me that so long as they deal in dead animals, it is difficult for them to give up that habit because the meat is so tasty. They contend that it is not right to place the sweets before a boy and ask him not to take them. They say that, if they are to give up that business, they should be engaged in some other business, e.g., weaving. Likewise, the Marwaris express their willingness to give up their dealing in foreign cloth. They even give me money for that purpose. But they say that so long as people do not give up using foreign cloth, it is difficult for them to give up dealing in the same. They contend that they have no enmity with khaddar, but unless there is created a market for the same, they would not give up their business in foreign cloth. Thus, if we want to protect the cows, we will have to take to the business of a chamar, we will have to take into our own hands all the tanneries in the country. There is only one tannery in the country which does not accept hides of slaughtered animals. Today lakhs of cattle are slaughtered in the country. The hides of such animals cost dearer than the hides of those who die a natural death because the dead ones have to be dragged and so their hides get stained. They, therefore, find it difficult to dispose of such hides in the market. The tanneries, therefore, in order to have brisk business, purchase the hides of slaughtered animals only. And the shoes that you use are made of such hides. Thus they will have to see to it that only the hides of the dead animals are made use of. And for this the chamars will have to be impressed with what their duties are. They should make use of the hides of dead animals only. And secondly, they will have to give up taking meat of dead animals. If this is not done, cow-protection will be an impossible proposition. We should fully understand the economic condition of the country and if we can make arrangements for sufficient supply of milk to those living in towns, it is just possible the slaughter of cows may decrease considerably. The large number of tanneries also subsist on the number of animals slaughtered in the country. On the

fall in the number of the latter, the number of the former will also go down.

Proceeding, he said that in that way they would have more money for the *goshalas*. Those that exist were languishing for want of sufficient funds. They would have to improve them if they were keen on cow-protection.

Mahatmaji next dwelt upon the subject of propagation of Hindi and Devanagari characters and said that some five or six years back he had spoken to them on the subject and they were pleased to subscribe 50 thousand rupees which had been utilized for teaching Hindi to thousands of Dravidians in South India and an account of which had already been published. Considerable work in that direction had been done in that part of the country. Hindi presses had been started, Hindi magazines were being published, Hindi-Telugu and Hindi-Tamil and other primary Hindi books in Tamil had been published. But much still remained to be done. He appealed to them to accept and propagate at least the Devanagari characters and publish important works of different languages in Hindi. If Rabindra Babu's works were published in Devanagari characters, those who knew Sanskrit might be able to follow them.

Thus Mahatmaji spoke to them on the four important subjects of the day, and appealed to them to help any or all of the four causes whichever they liked most. He also appealed to them to contribute handsomely to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. He again reminded them of the four things about which he had spoken to them and appealed to them to help any one of the four thėy liked or all. But he would tell them that all the four were equally important and righteous causes. Referring again to the untouchables, he said that he was trying to open schools to make arrangements for water for them where none existed. He wanted also to make separate temples for them. But the latter work must await till really capable and righteous men came out from among the untouchables to manage the temples.

Concluding, Mahatmaji expressed his sincere gratitude to the audience for calmly listening to his long address and said:

I am now a poor man, but I am seeking the co-operation of the rich for providing clothes to my naked sisters. I want to establish *Ramarajya*. I do not talk to the men about *Ramarajya* because I know that they are sure to help that cause when the womenfolk come forward to do so. Therefore, whenever I talk to the womenfolk I always talk not about swaraj but of *Ramarajya*. This *Ramarajya* does not concern merely the administration of the country. But certain other reforms as well are absolutely necessary and these are comprehended in the four things I have mentioned above. Therefore, I do not want to offer to you any temptation except that of dharma. Both you as well as your sisters in villages will reap the fruits thereof,

We will be able to protect our dharma mainly by the strength of our own character. By character alone we will be able to offer protection even to the world. You are rendering all possible help to me as you should in this direction. May I always prove worthy of the same is my earnest prayer to God.

The Searchlight, 9-10-1925

158. LETTER TO J. KUSARY

ON TOUR,
October 3, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

You asked me questions now over a month ago about the advisability of getting enough recognition from the Calcutta University so as to enable you to take boys who might desire to appear for its examinations. Personally I am averse to it. I do not like this mania for examinations. It has undermined the mental and physical health of our youth. For this reason alone, if for no other, I would like national institutions to remain unbending and depend for their progress upon their own inherent merit. I would like a proper revolt against the soul-destroying examinations. But you know best what you should do in the circumstances that face you and if you have not the same repugnance that I have for the mania for university certificates, you would unhesitatingly secure the restricted recognition you mention. What with my temperament would be bad for me need not be necessarily bad for you or anyone else with a different temperament. I would therefore like you not to follow my opinion unless it appeals to you so forcibly as to give you satisfaction, even though without recognition your school may contain only twenty boys or even less. I would love to train even one boy with robust independence. I thoroughly understand and appreciate all that you say in favour of securing 'recognition' of the limited type referred to by you and it is a view that deserves respectful consideration. I would not therefore misunderstand you if, after weighing all the pros and cons, you come to the conclusion that it is best for you and the people in whose midst you are working to apply for recognition.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7189

159. TO MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF KUTCH

On the 21st of October, I shall, God willing, set foot in Kutch for the first time in my life.[1] In agreeing to go there at this time I have yielded to the power of love. Other provinces, out of compassion for me, have left me free for this year. You want me to go there while the Maharao[2] is present and the thought was painful to me that, if I did not go in October, a trip that had been talked about for nine months could not be undertaken until April. You have assured me that you will let me have rest in Kutch and that you will hand me large sums of money for the cause of the spinning-wheel and khadi. This is a great temptation for me.

I too am eager to meet the Maharao Saheb. I am a good friend and servant of the Princes. My father, grand-father and other relations were in the service of Indian States. Even today, I see a few of my relations earning their living in the States of Kathiawar.

But my connections with Indian States cannot blind my eyes to facts. I am not unaware of the state of misrule in certain States. I have received a pile of letters from the people regarding the Maharao Saheb's administration. I shall express my genuine regard for the Maharao Saheb by putting the substance of these letters before him with an open mind.

I do not hanker after respect from either the Princes or their subjects. I have had too much of respect. If I was not afraid of appearing guilty of discourtesy, I would agree to visit a place only on condition that I was not given an address of welcome there. The cries of "Victory to the Mahatma" jar on my ears. All shouting has become unbearable to me. I wish to remain an untouchable so far as touching of my feet in reverence is concerned. If people feel any respect for me, I should certainly like to see them emulate whatever is good in me. My brothers and sisters in Kutch have showered love on me. They have also given me large sums of money for my work.

My hunger, however, can never be satisfied.

In my old age now I have only two or three means of worshipping God. I should like to devote the rest of my life to these.

[1] Gandhiji reached Kutch on October 22, 1925.

[2] The ruler of the then princely State of Kutch

The name of Rama is dear to my lips; if, however, this is not engraved in my heart, its mechanical repetition would only bring me degradation. What is in one's heart is certain to be expressed in one's actions. I have, therefore, always regarded the service of others as the only true dharma.

Thus it is that I found the spinning-wheel and the work of eradication of untouchability. Through the spinning-wheel I serve the poorest of the poor in the country. I invite the Maharao Saheb and his subjects to join me in this *yajna*.

However, the people of Kutch are of a venturesome spirit. They cross the oceans for the sake of trade. It is not enough for them to spin and wear khadi. I expect them to give me money and help the walking skeletons in the country to put on some flesh. It should not be forgotten that this is what we have resolved to do to perpetuate Deshbandhu's memory. I have heard it said that I take money from Kutch and send it elsewhere. This is a fact, but it should not be a complaint. Why should I collect money for Kutch? If there is poverty in Kutch, the fact is a slur on the Maharao Saheb and on the multi-millionaires of Kutch. I have never lived there. Through whom can I use the money there? It would be proper for the people of Kutch to collect the money which they need and use it there. It is my job to collect money from wherever possible and use it where I see the need and for work which seems essential to me or for specified, worthy causes. There are rich *Vaishnavas* in Kutch. Being myself a *Vaishnava*, I believe I know what the term means. My conscience can never accept the idea that a *Vaishnava* can regard himself polluted by the touch of an *Antyaja* and still be a *Vaishnava*. Just as, through the spinning-wheel, I wish to serve the Divine Mother, whose children are the poor, so I wish to purify Hinduism by working for the eradication of untouchability and serving the *Antyajas* thereby. We cannot persist in the practice of untouchability, and at the same time hope to preserve Hinduism. I cannot bear *Antyajas* being treated with contempt. I would not have even the sovereignty of this world or the next if I had to forsake the *Antyajas* for that. I wish that the *Vaishnavas* of Kutch will understand their dharma.

Do not forget that king Yudhishthira refused to leave behind even the dog who had accompanied him and enter heaven by himself. He accepted the same dharma as you and I do. Who was king Nishad[1] from whom Rama accepted fruit with love?

[1] King of a tribe dwelling in the Vindhyas, in the *Ramayana*

Bharat felt sanctified as he embraced the other with love. Who is a *Chandal* in this *Kaliyuga*, or rather, who is not? Let us not distort the meaning of the Shastras. Let us not drown ourselves in a well just because it belongs to our forefathers. Let us swim in it instead. A custom or Shastra which is contrary to universally accepted moral principles is not fit to be followed. If anyone can show that the Vedas enjoin cow-slaughter or killing of animals, shall we be prepared to follow them?

You have no Hindu-Muslim problem in your part of the country, and even if you have one, I have accepted defeat and abandoned the attempt to solve it. As, however, the elephant king learnt to pray truly only when he had failed in all his attempts, so I believe that I, too, having failed in my efforts, am now truly praying to God for the welfare of both the communities. Dharma enjoins *tapascharya* in times of difficulty. *Tapascharya* means self-purification, knowledge of the *atman* and its realization. If there are amongst us some who are pure in heart, despite our conflicts everything will turn out well in the end.

I have always told women that my swaraj means *Ramarajya* or the rule of dharma. We cannot succeed in establishing it unless we carry out the programmes mentioned above.

For the Hindus, however, rule of dharma is impossible as long as they do not attend also to the dharma of protecting cows. This cannot be done by merely establishing *goshalas* of some sort. I have started effective work in this field only lately, but I think we can succeed in it with the help of people like you. I see that it is quite possible to prevent the slaughter of innumerable cows, bullocks, buffaloes, etc. All that is required is expert knowledge, systematic work and money. Money is donated in plenty but, in my opinion, it is misused for want of knowledge.

I have written all this for you to reflect upon. Give much thought to it. As you will let me have plenty of rest, we shall be able to discuss these matters if you can set apart some time for the purpose. Point out to me any error you may see in my line of reasoning. If there is none, give me all possible help.

Your friend and servant,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 4-10-1925

160. *SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION*

The establishment of the Spinners' Association is no ordinary event. It is the fruit of the pledge taken by its founders. It proclaims their faith in the spinning-wheel and their determination to sacrifice everything for its sake.

To me, it stands for swaraj. I believe it to be impossible to serve the millions except through it. No one can serve all individually. Every person, however, can engage himself in work which involves the service of all and whose fruit will be shared by everyone. Only the spinning-wheel can reach crores of people, can satisfy their hunger and function as *Annapoorna*[1] to them. If I start a factory which makes baskets, I would thereby be able to help thousands of persons, if a soap factory, I can provide employment to about four thousand persons, and to the same number through a textile mill,—all the mills taken together pro-, vide employment to fifteen lakhs of persons and offer dividends to about four thousand persons. If, however, I engage myself in promoting spinning, I join an industry providing employment to crores.

On reflection, the reader will see that there is no other work which can benefit crores. Agriculture is indeed one such profession. But, for one thing, it has not disappeared and, for another it is not a kind of work which anyone can do at any hour and for any length of time. But spinning? One can do it at any place, and, if one carries a *takli* in one's pocket, one can spin a few yards by way of *yajna* even while walking. Spinning done even for a minute is useful, but one cannot do farming in that way. That work must be done for a certain minimum, and considerable length of time at one place. Spinning, therefore, is a great sacrifice in which all can easily join.

Is there anyone who would not like to join an Association devoted to such work? How can we argue with people who object to spinning? Why should anyone fail to welcome the addition of a few yards of yarn to the country's wealth, and that too through work done in spare time?

I wish that all men and women will join this Association. I did not like and many others also did not like, the change permitting the contribution of 1,000 instead of 2,000 yards of

[1] Goddess of plenty

yarn. This, however, is no reason for keeping out of the Association. Anyone who wishes may certainly contribute 2,000 yards. It is a very desirable thing to take a pledge, but the omission of the clause requiring a pledge does not mean that those who were in favour of taking a pledge should not join the Association. They may, as individuals, certainly take the pledge. Moreover, even though a pledge is not necessary the understanding is that, except for circumstances beyond one's control, every member will spin daily for half an hour. The idea of prescribing a pledge was dropped, but every member of the Executive Committee will regard the spinning movement as his principal sphere of work.

But what about persons under eighteen and those who cannot spin regularly? As in the past, they should spin and send as gift as much yarn as they can.

No cotton will be given this time, and no attempt will be made to flatter and persuade people to spin. Let only those send yarn who accept spinning as a sacred duty. Cotton costs very little and, besides, we should not spend on anything more than it is worth. The very purpose of begging for voluntary gifts of cotton is that:

1. khadi may be made cheaper;

2. people, instead of idling away their time, may spend it in the service of the country;

3. the rich may establish a direct link with the poor and think of them every day;

4. everyone may help in bringing about boycott of foreign cloth;

5. everyone may serve the country in one way or another to the best of his or her ability;

6. the middle class, which at present lives on the toil of the poor and willingly gives nothing in return, may now give something;

7. The middle class may, by its example of spinning, show to the poor who have lost faith in life itself the means of recovering that faith.

These results will follow only if people spin with love. Much monetary help will be required in this great task. I hope that those who have faith in the spinning-wheel will not only contribute yarn but also, if they can afford it, help with money.

This body will provide employment to many in the middle class. The figures which I have published show that even today a large number are earning their livelihood through this work. If the Association works in a big way it can become a means of

providing employment to thousands. It is not at all surprising that a work which involves trade worth crores of rupees can help thousands to earn an honest living.

And now about the question of confidence. Are the members of the Committee men of ability and do they inspire confidence? In my humble view, they are and they do. It is true that there are other workers of equal worth who have been left out. It has been suggested that a sort of Brains Trust should be formed by including in it all those who ought to have been on the Committee but are not. I have thought over this suggestion, and feel that there is no need for such a body. There is less to think about and more to do. It would, therefore, be better to have as small a body as possible consisting of men who would give all their time to the task of setting up a machinery for implementing the decisions.

This is an Association for service, and not for satisfying one's desire for power and authority. In a body in which there is no scope at all for anyone to assume leadership and the only duty is that of service, there can be no rivalry for positions of authority. I wish that those whose one aim is to serve will send whatever suggestions they feel like making any time. If we form a Brains Trust, it should meet and deliberate. This may be necessary when we have to consider a new policy or method of work. In the present instance, what is required is supervision of work. I, therefore, feel that a committee of twelve is sufficient for our purpose. I have given up the idea of filling the three vacancies which remain even in this small number, for it is not necessary that every place should be filled. Experience alone will teach us what more we need.

Our aim in undertaking trade in khadi is service. The service motive has no place in other forms of trade. It is believed that business and service do not go together. We cannot do trade in khadi at all without State patronage or unless we undertake it with service motive. If those who undertake it should do so with such a motive, those who buy khadi should be actuated by the same motive. There is no doubt that anyone who gives up the use of Paris laçe or Manchester muslin, despite all his love for them, and takes to khadi, will be serving others by his action.

May God increase the number of dedicated khadi workers.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-10-1925

161. ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA

The All-India Congress Committee has passed a resolution to the effect that meetings should be held at all places on the 11th of October to extend our moral support to the Indians in South Africa in the impending calamity that threatens them. People belonging to all parties should be invited to these meetings. As there is no difference of opinion on this matter, we can hope that persons belonging to all parties will attend. Even an expression of our feelings will strengthen the spirit of the Indians of South Africa. These meetings will help the Indian Government if it wishes to do something, and, in any case, we shall have done our best. I, therefore, hope that meetings will be held at all places and that people will attend in large numbers. No one with any political consciousness can be altogether ignorant of the problem in South Africa.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-10-1925

162. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

October 5, 1925

MY DEAR ESTHER,

I am writing this at Deoghar which is a beautiful place in the Bihar tour. Today is my Monday[1]. I have your long letter before me. I have always thought of you all. I was much relieved to know that you had completely recovered and that the recovery was due to an Indian medicine. I hope that, having regained your health, you will keep it.

It is good that Miss Petersen is to go to Denmark early next year. She deserves the rest. It is nice too that she will leave the school in a progressive state. I had no doubt about its success. Patience was all that was needed. In these days of many bogus or selfish things, people look askance at anything new or out of the ordinary.

Are you also at Porto Novo? Or has Menon got something after his heart?

[1] Day of silence

Of course, you are all coming into the Spinners' Association. Have you read the constitution?

I had a very sweet letter a month or two ago from a Danish lady. I would certainly love to go to Denmark. But [I] have no desire to leave India until non-violence is more firmly rooted than it is in the soil. I know that it is truth, but I may be a poor representative of it. This I know that I cannot live without truth and non-violence.

If you take up the task of writing my biography, you have to pass many months at the Ashram and, may be, even travel to South Africa and visit Champaran and Kheda, probably the Punjab, too. It is a big job if it is done thoroughly. It was in these places I tried to work out non-violence as I understand and know it.

With love to you all and kisses to baby,

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

I reach the Ashram in the beginning of November.

From a photostat: Courtesy: National Archives of India

163. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

October 7, 1925

Happily the question of British Indians in South Africa is not a party question. India must be able to avert the calamity that threatens to overtake our countrymen in that sub-continent. The proposed legislation[1] is a manifest breach of the Settlement of 1914. My experience of the Indian question in South Africa is one of a series of breaches of promises and declarations which have been proved from official records. The proposed legislation is in effect a confiscation of almost every right that the British Indians possess. Their sole crime consists in being good traders and not being Europeans. There can be no compromise in this matter, no repatriation even when euphemistically described as voluntary. Let me, however, say that retaliation will be no re-

[1] Areas Reservation and Immigration and Registration (Further Provision) Bill, introduced in the Union Parliament in July 1925. The Bill sought to prevent acquisition of land by Asiatics except in certain specified areas. *Vide* Vol. XXVI, pp. 276-7.

medy if only because there can be no effective retaliation. The only remedy is diplomatic pressure. Lord Hardinge applied it successfully.[1] Will the present Government repeat the performance?

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-10-1925

164. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

Aso Vad 5 [October 7, 1925][2]

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I have not been able yet to read your long letter. I had your second one yesterday. It is certain that I will not be able to go there on the 31st October but I shall fix the date when I reach the Ashram in the beginning of November.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2692. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

165. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, GIRIDIH

October 7, 1925

Gandhiji received addresses from the Local Board, the public, the Municipality and the *goshala* in a public meeting attended by not less than ten thousand men.

Mahatmaji said that he was given to understand that Giridih being a mica field, labourers could not be induced to take to the charkha when they got more money by working in the pits. To them he said that he could understand labourers not spinning, but he could not understand where was the difficulty in their not using khadi. The middle-class people had ample time to spare and they could easily afford to give half an hour to spinning, not for themselves but for the sake of their country, and give over the yarn produced as charity to the Congress. One yard of khaddar was certainly comparatively dearer than the cheaper foreign cloth, but all the same it was cheaper as it enabled some money to go direct into the pockets of their poor sisters and the weavers. He next referred to untouchability and said that

[1] The reference presumably is to a speech Lord Hardinge delivered at Madras on November 24, 1913 concerning the condition of Indians in South Africa; *vide* Vol. XII, Appendix XVI.

[2] From the postmark

it was a standing disgrace for Hinduism, and although he thanked them for running a school for the untouchables, he could not be satisfied if they themselves did not go to them to mix with them and enquire about their poverty and their grievances, and try to remove them.

In the Local Board address it was hinted that the obstinacy of the laws and their differences with the District Board stood in the way of their doing even their own work.

In these conditions it was practically impossible for them to claim any solid work to their credit. But they could promise to do any work whatever in future when conditions improved. To them Mahatmaji said that no obstacle was too great if they only had the will to surmount it. On this somebody whispered that it was difficult to keep the roads in a good condition when they had no money. Mahatmaji retorting said that they should work on the roads themselves and see that they were well kept if they had not sifficient money to repair them.

A municipal commissioner said that he had not sufficient money to engage scavengers. In that case, Mahatmaji said they must do the work of scavengers themselves and clean even the night-soil themselves. He had done these things in Durban and he knew the dignity of it.

The *goshala* address referred to cow-protection. To them he would only say this—that the Hindus themselves were responsible for the large number of cows slaughtered. If they wanted, they could stop cow-slaughter today for which they would have to raise its price and not appeal to or fight with the Muslims or Englishmen to spare the cows. They had to establish dairies where cheapest and purest milk could be had. They must not look upon the business of tannery as a peculiarly low one, but should organize the *mochis*[1] and have tanneries of their own where hides of only dead, and not slaughtered, animals could be used. Their *goshalas* were not working well. They must be run on commercial lines. With an appeal for the Deshbandhu fund he concluded his address. A decent collection was made on the spot and a purse of Rs. 2,075 was presented to him on behalf of the Giridih public.

The Searchlight, 9-10-1925

[1] Cobblers or shoe-makers

166. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, GIRIDIH

October 7, 1925

Gandhiji in reply[1] . . . thanked the ladies for the kind words expressed in the address. He said that, in order to attain swaraj which was not only the political Home Rule but also dharma raj of the kind which was generally understood as *Ramarajya*, which was something higher than ordinary political emancipation, they must try to become like Sita of yore who was the soul of *Ramarajya*. In the days of Sita every household had its charkha just as they find a hearth in every home. Sita also spun on her own charkha which might have been bedecked with jewels and probably ornamented with gold, but all the same it was still a charkha. Moreover they must try to idealize her in her piety as well. Concluding, he appealed for the A.I. Deshbandhu Memorial Fund in response to which a good collection was made on the spot.

The Searchlight, 11-10-1925

167. BIHAR NOTES

WITH ABORIGINALS

From Chakradharpur to Chaibasa is a pleasant motor ride over a very good road. It was at Chaibasa that I made the acquaintance of the *Ho* tribe—a most interesting body of men and women, simple as children, with a faith that it is not easy to shake. Many of them have taken to the charkha and khaddar. Congress workers began the work of reformation among them in 1921. Many have given up eating carrion and some have even taken to vegetarianism. The *Mundas* are another tribe whom I met at Khunti on my way to Ranchi. The scope for work in their midst is inexhaustible. Christian missionaries have been doing valuable service for generations, but, in my humble opinion, their work suffers because at the end of it they expect conversion of these simple people to Christianity. I had the pleasure of seeing some of their schools in these places. It was all pleasing, but I could see the coming conflict between the missionaries and the Hindu workers. The latter have no difficulty in making

[1] An address was presented to Gandhiji by the Head Mistress of the local girls' school. He also received a purse for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

their service commendable to the *Hos*, the *Mundas* and the others. How very nice it would be if the missionaries rendered humanitarian service without the ulterior aim of conversion! But I must not reiterate the remarks I made before the Missionary Conference and other Christian bodies in Calcutta.[1] I know that such a revolutionary change in Christian endeavour as I am advocating cannot come through any advice, especially from an outsider, however well-meant it may be; it can only come either out of a definite individual conviction or out of some great mass movement among Christians themselves. Among these tribes there is quite a colony of them called *bhaktas*, literally meaning devotees. They are believers in khaddar. Men as well as women ply the charkha regularly. They wear khaddar woven by themselves. Many of them had walked miles with their charkhas on their shoulders. I saw nearly four hundred of them all plying their charkhas most assiduously at the meeting I had the privilege of addressing. They have their own *bhajans* which they sing in chorus.

IN CHHOTA NAGPUR

Almost the whole of my travelling in Chhota Nagpur was in motor-cars, but the roads are all good and the scenery around magnificent. From Chaibasa we had to retrace our steps to Chakradharpur and from there we motored to Ranchi, halting at Khunti and one or two other places. Just before reaching Ranchi at 7 o'clock in the evening a meeting of ladies had been arranged. I do not think that either the organizers or the ladies had bargained for my appeal for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. But as I hardly ever fail to make that appeal when I address public meetings, I made it at this meeting also. The vast majority were Bengalis. Many being unprepared had no money with them. These, therefore, parted with their ornaments, some of which were heavy things. It did one's soul good to see these sisters gladly parting with their ornaments in order to honour the memory of one they loved. Needless to say, I make it perfectly clear at these meetings that the whole of the gifts would be utilized for spreading the charkha and khaddar.

In Ranchi I was taken to Golkunda[2], a little village where an experiment in hand-spinning is being made under the aegis

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXVII, pp. 434-9.

[2] It transpired that Gandhiji had made a slip in regard to the name. *Vide* "Notes", 22-10-1925, sub-title, "A Correction".

of a co-operative society by Babu Girishchandra Majumdar, who is a khaddar enthusiast. He expects spinning to become a thorough success. The experiment has just begun. If organizing is properly done and the spinning-wheels fulfil the standard requirements, there should be no difficulty about the charkha becoming the success it has been elsewhere.

There were two theatrical performances given at Ranchi by amateur companies for the purpose of Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. One was given by Bengalis and the other by Biharis. As they were given by amateurs I had no difficulty in accepting their invitations but I was severely disappointed over the Bengali performance. I could see little difference between the performances of professionals and this amateur company. There was complete aping of professionals. The dresses were all made of foreign material. The colouring of faces was also resorted to whereas I had expected that these performances would be subdued and that there would be at least khaddar used for dress material. So when I undertook to go to the Bihari amateurs' play I made the condition that if they wanted me to see their play they should have their dresses made of khaddar and that not merely for the occasion but for all their performances. To my agreeable surprise, the condition was readily accepted. There were only a few hours left for making all that change, but they did it and the manager made the announcement of the promise given to me and prayed for God's help that they might be able to fulfil the promise. What the Biharis' play lost in tinsel effect it gained, in my opinion, in dignity by the change adopted. I commend this very desirable change to all amateur theatrical companies. Indeed, even the professionals who have any patriotic instinct can easily make this change and thus contribute, though ever so little, to the economic uplift of the teeming millions of India.

I must omit several interesting items including a very pleasing discussion on khaddar with Messrs N. K. Roy and S. K. Rao of the Department of Industries and a visit to the Brahmacharya Ashram which owes its existence to the munificence the Maharajah of Kasimbazar. From Ranchi we motored to Hazaribagh where, in addition to the usual appointments, I was called upon to address the students of St. Columba's Missionary College, a very old institution. I spoke to the students on social service and endeavoured to show that it was impossible without character and that such service on a large scale in India was only possible through penetration into the villages and that it had to be its own reward for it brought no excitement, no advertisement and had often

to be done under most trying circumstances and in the teeth of superstition and ignorance. I endeavoured to show that the best form that social service could take in India was through the spinning-wheel and khaddar, because it brought young men in touch with the villagers, it enabled them to put a few coppers every day into the pockets of the villagers and created an indissoluble bond between the latter and themselves, and it helped them to know their Maker because the selfless service of the poor was the service of God.

Khuda Bux Library

From Hazaribagh, with a few stoppages on the motor road to Gaya we went to Patna where the main work was the activity of the All-India Congress Committee and the inauguration of the All-India Spinners' Association. It was at Patna that I discovered my health would break down under the incessant fatigue of travelling. The shouts of the crowds had almost proved unbearable as we were nearing Gaya where I was obliged even to stuff my ears to prevent the shouts making me almost swoon. Rajendra Babu had therefore taken elaborate precautions to prevent noisy demonstrations of blind but well-meant affection and he very kindly revised and cut down my programme. I had therefore comparative rest at Patna. I was able to fulfil the long cherished desire of visiting the Khuda Bux Oriental Library. I had heard much about it. But I had never realized that it had the rich treasures I was privileged to see. Its devoted founder Khan Bahadur Khuda Bux who was a *vakil*, made it a labour of love to collect even from abroad many ancient and rare Arabic and Persian books. The decorations in some of the hand-written copies of Koran that I saw were of great beauty. The unknown artists must have given years of patient labour to the creation. Every page of the decorated edition of the *Shahanamah* is a work of art—a veritable feast for the eye. I understand that the literary value of some of the manuscripts treasured in this library is no less great. All honour to the founder for his great gift to the nation.

A Government Experiment

The other interesting thing I was able to see in Patna was the workshop conducted by the Department of Industries. Mr. Rao is the Superintendent. The workshop itself is a modern building, well lighted, well ventilated, well planned and scrupulously clean. Handloom weaving and toy-making, which is the speciality of

Patna, are the features of this workshop. Improved looms for weaving tapes and bedstead-straps are commendable. I could, however, not help feeling that in this admirable workshop, the central thing, the spinning-wheel, was wanting. Improved toy-making will certainly give better wages to the makers of toys and it has therefore properly a place in a workshop in a city like Patna. An Indian workshop is also incomplete without handloom weaving. But no national department of industries can be considered to be at all complete that takes no note of hand-spinning and therethrough of millions of villagers who are at present without a supplementary industry. The difficulties that were suggested to me in making hand-spinning a success were mainly two:

(1) Hand-spun yarn can never compete with mill-spun yarn because it has never yet been found to be as strong as mill-spun yarn.

(2) The output of the spinning-wheels is too small to be profitable.

The experience of those who have worn khaddar for years is that where it is made of good hand-spun yarn it is any day more durable than the best mill-spun cloth of the same count. For instance, some of my Andhra friends have shown me their dhotis which have lasted four years and upwards against mill-spun dhotis which wear out inside of a year. But my point is not that hand-spun is more durable, but that hand-spinning being the only possible supplementary industry for the peasantry of India, which means 85 per cent of its population, all our arrangements regarding clothing should be fashioned on the understanding that it must be supplied from hand-spun yarn. Thus, our energy should be concentrated not on finding out the best and the cheapest yarn, no matter where and how spun, but on finding out the cheapest and the best hand-spun yarn. If my proposition is sound, all the industrial departments of the nation should revolve round the charkha as the centre. The Department of Industries, therefore, would make improvements in the spinning-wheels so as to increase the output. They would buy nothing but hand-spun yarn, so that hand-spinning is automatically stimulated. They would devise means of utilizing every quality of hand-spun yarn obtainable. They would issue prizes for the finest hand-spun yarn. They would explore all possible fields for getting good hand-spun yarn. This does not mean less encouragement to hand-weaving. It simply means adding to the encouragement of hand-weaving and hand-spinning and thereby serving those most in need of help.

But it has been objected that hand-spinning is not profitable. But surely it is profitable for those who have many an idle hour at their disposal and to whose scanty income even a pice is a welcome addition. The whole of the charkha programme falls to pieces if millions of peasants are not living in enforced idleness for at least four months in the year. Wherever khaddar workers are doing their labour of love, it has become not only profitable but a blessing to villagers to have men who would buy their yarn. Those whose income does not exceed five to six rupees per month and have time at their disposal would gladly take in work that brings them an addition of two rupees per month.

MALKHACHAK AND OTHER CENTRES

I have before me a report of work done by a band of volunteers in several parts of Bihar. I visited their centre at Malkhachak after my visit to the industrial workshop. The place is about twelve miles from Patna. In Malkhachak alone, with a population of about a thousand there are four hundred wheels going and there are thirty weavers weaving hand-spun yarn. I saw some of the sisters plying their wheels. They were indifferently constructed. Yet the spinners seemed to be happy with them. They get two rupees per month on an average. An addition of eight hundred rupees per month in a village containing one thousand souls is surely a big income any day. I do not count the wages earned by the weavers at the rate of fifteen rupees per month. That may not be a new addition. These workers, in addition to organizing spinning, are also giving the village folk such medical relief as is possible with their limited resources and still more limited medical knowledge. The report of their work which was started in 1921 mentions that they are serving six centres, viz., Madhubani, Kapasia, Shakri, Madhepur and Pupri, besides Malkhachak. They wove in 1922, Rs. 62,000 worth of khaddar, in 1923, Rs. 84,000, in 1924, Rs. 63,000. And they have already woven one lac worth during the nine months of 1925. They wove less in 1924 because of want of cotton. Their capacity for extension, the report says, is almost unlimited, given a regular supply of cotton and a market insured for the disposal of their wares. They believe that almost every village in the neighbourhood would welcome the presence of these workers. The quality of khaddar produced by them is excellent and is by no means all of the coarsest variety. Some of it is even exceedingly fine. They pay four annas per seer of 40 *tolas* for spinning ten counts and 2½ annas per yard of 45 inches width for weaving. They have 28

workers. The upkeep of these depots including food and travelling amounts to Rs. 25 per month per worker on an average. These depots are not at a loss. They organize their own sales. The quality of yarn they receive shows a steady improvement from month to month. I invite the Department of Industries and the public in general to study the condition of these villages and verify the facts given above for themselves. These workers are responsible for 7,000 wheels and 250 looms weaving hand-spun yarn in the villages.

The condition of Bihar is in no way extraordinary. It is more or less the same in many parts of Bengal, Andhra, Tamilnad and the United Provinces. I have mentioned these provinces because the condition of those who have taken up spinning can be studied there. At the present moment, most of the other provinces would show the same state of things. Orissa for instance where the people are living from hand to mouth only awaits skilled workers and efficient organization. Rajputana, in spite of its millionaires, is again a tract where the art of spinning is still alive and where the people are extremely poor. If only the Rajahs and the Maharajahs will lend their hearty support to the movement, encourage khaddar wear in their States and remove the handicap on khadi wherever it exists, this land of chronic droughts will, without any great outlet of capital and without any fuss, have lacs of rupees per year for its poor people.

Young India, 8-10-1925

168. FATE OF NON-CO-OPERATORS

A friend asks:

> With your complete surrender to the Swaraj Party what will be the fate of those who have made non-co-operation their political religion?

The questioner forgets that I remain just as confirmed a non-co-operator as ever. And it is not only my political but it is also my domestic and social religion. As I have repeatedly said in these pages, voluntary and health-giving co-operation is impossible without the possibility of non-co-operation at a certain stage and under certain conditions. The Congress does not prescribe to anybody his religion. It is a sensitive barometer, from time to time registering the variation in the temperament of politically-minded India. No Congressman is bound to act contrary to his political religion. But he may not now use the

name of the Congress for furthering non-co-operation. Under the resolution, the prestige and financial resources of the Congress where they are not earmarked are pledged for the support of furthering the Swarajist Council policy and, therefore, not only are Congress organizations entitled to vote supplies for the furtherance of the Swarajist policy, but they are bound, where they would spend money for Council propaganda at all, to use them for the Swarajist policy. Conversely, no Congress organization where there is a clear majority against spending or raising money for any pure political work is bound by the resolution to do so contrary to their own belief. All Congress resolutions are for guidance and direction; they cannot be for coercion.

The correspondent further asks:

> What will be the position of the Spinners' Association with reference to non-co-operation?

That association has nothing to do with political non-co-operation. The preamble precludes politics. I am the President of that association, not in my capacity as a confirmed non-co-operator, but in that of an out-and-out khadi lover. It is a commercial or economic association with philanthropic motives. It will conduct commerce in khaddar not for the benefit of its members but of the nation. The members instead of receiving dividends will give yearly subscriptions in order that the nation may gain through their subscriptions. It invites the politically-minded co-operators and non-co-operators, Rajahs, Maharajahs and persons belonging to all castes and creeds who have faith in the economic capacity of the spinning-wheel and khaddar.

The correspondent adds:

> The programme of the Spinners' Association cannot be complete without the fivefold boycott.

I do not see it at all. Why may not the busiest lawyer at least wear khaddar as some are now doing? Why may not the scholars and teachers of Government schools do likewise? The Council-goers are certainly doing it, so far as the Swarajists are concerned. They have taken khaddar to the Assembly and the Councils. Several titled men habitually wear khaddar.

The last difficulty of my correspondent is:

> If the irreconcilable non-co-operators are driven out of the Congress and also find no place in the Spinners' Association, will it be possible for them to form an all-India association of their own?

The question is extremely badly put. No one is ever driven out of the Congress. People may and do retire from it when they find the action of the majority to be in conflict with their conscience. The majority cannot be blamed for not suiting itself to the conscience of a minority. And if there are non-co-operators who consider it to be repugnant to their conscience to remain in the Congress while it countenances Council-entry they may certainly retire. I would even go further and suggest that they should retire, if by remaining in the Congress they wish to hamper Council work. In my opinion the Congress machinery needs to be worked without any friction from within. I have already shown that there is room for non-co-operators in the Spinners' Association as there is also for co-operators. If in spite of it there are non-co-operators who consider it their duty to form an all-India association of their own, it is certainly possible for them to do so, but I would consider it to be thoroughly inadvisable. It is enough if the non-co-operators will, for the time being, carry on their non-co-operation in their own persons.

Young India, 8-10-1925

169. FROM EUROPE

When I think of my littleness and my limitations on the one hand and of the expectations raised about me on the other, I become dazed for the moment, but I come to myself as soon as I realize that these expectations are a tribute not to me, a curious mixture of Jekyll and Hyde, but to the incarnation, however imperfect but comparatively great in me, of the two priceless qualities of truth and non-violence. I must therefore not shirk the responsibility of giving what aid I can to fellow-seekers after truth from the West.

I have already dealt with a letter from America. I have before me one from Germany. It is a closely reasoned letter. It has remained with me for nearly a month. At first I thought I would send a private reply and let it be published in Germany, if the correspondent desired it. But, having reread the letter, I have come to the conclusion that I should deal with it in these columns. I give the letter below in full:[1]

In my travels I have not the file of *Young India* before me, but there is no difficulty about my endorsing the statement that

[1] For the text of this letter *vide* Appendix III.

"Satyagraha demands absolute non-violence and that even a woman who is in danger of being violated must not defend herself with violence." Both these statements relate to an ideal state and, therefore, are made with reference to those men and women who have so far purified themselves as to have no malice, no anger, no violence in them. That does not mean that the woman in the imagined case would quietly allow herself to be violated. In the first instance, such a woman would stand in no danger of violence and, in the second, if she did, without doing violence to the ruffian she would be able completely to defend her honour.

But I must not enter into details. Even women who can defend themselves with violence are not many. Happily, however, cases of indecent assaults are not also very many. Be that as it may, I believe implicitly in the proposition that perfect purity is its own defence. The veriest ruffian becomes, for the time being, tame in the presence of resplendent purity.

The writer is not correctly informed about my attitude in regard to General Dyer. He would be pleased to know that not only did I not recommend any punishment of General Dyer but even my colleagues, largely out of their generous regard for me, waived the demand for punishment. What, however, I did ask for, and I do press for even now, is the stopping of the pension to General Dyer. It is no part of the plan of non-violence to pay the wrongdoer for the wrong he does which practically would be the case if I became a willing party to the continuation of the pension to General Dyer. But let me not be misunderstood. I am quite capable of recommending even punishment to wrongdoers under conceivable circumstances; for instance I would not hesitate under the present state of society to confine thieves and robbers, which is in itself a kind of punishment. But I would also admit that it is not satyagraha and that it is a fall from the pure doctrine. That would be not an admission of weakness of the doctrine but weakness of myself. I have no other remedy to suggest in such cases in the present state of society. I am therefore satisfied with advocating the use of prisons more as reformatories than as places of punishment.

But I would draw the distinction between killing and detention or even corporal punishment. I think that there is a difference not merely in quantity but also in quality. I can recall the punishment of detention. I can make reparation to the man upon whom I inflict corporal punishment. But once a man is killed, the punishment is beyond recall or reparation. God alone can take life, because He alone gives it.

I hope there is no confusion in the writer's mind when he couples the self-immolation of a satyagrahi with the punishment imposed from without. But, in order to avoid even a possibility of it, let me make it clear that the doctrine of violence has reference only to the doing of injury by one to another. Suffering injury in one's own person, is on the contrary, of the essence of non-violence and is the chosen substitute for violence to others. It is not because I value life low that I can countenance with joy thousands voluntarily losing their lives for satyagraha, but because I know that it results in the long run in the least loss of life and what is more, it ennobles those who lose their lives and morally enriches the world for their sacrifice. I think that the writer is correct in saying that non-co-operation is not merely an ideal but also "a safe and quick way to freedom for India". I do suggest that the doctrine holds good also as between States and States. I know that I am treading on delicate ground if I refer to the late War. But I fear that I must in order to make the position clear. It was a war of aggrandizement, as I have understood, on either part. It was a war for dividing the spoils of the exploitation of weaker races, otherwise euphemistically called the world commerce. If Germany today changed her policy and made a determination to use her freedom not for dividing the commerce of the world but for protecting through her moral superiority the weaker races of the earth, she could certainly do that without armament. It would be found that, before general disarmament in Europe commences, as it must some day unless Europe is to commit suicide, some nation will have to dare to disarm herself and take large risks. The level of non-violence in that nation, if that event happily comes to pass, will naturally have risen so high as to command universal respect. Her judgments will be unerring, her decisions will be firm, her capacity for heroic self-sacrifice will be great, and she will want to live as much for other nations as for herself. I may not push this delicate subject any further. I know that I am writing in a theoretical way upon a practical question without knowing all its bearings. My only excuse is, if I understand it correctly, that that is what the writer has wanted me to do.

I do justify entire non-violence and consider it possible in relations between man and man and nations and nations, but it is not "a resignation from all real fighting against wickedness". On the contrary, the non-violence of my conception is a more active and more real fighting against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness. I contemplate a mental and,

therefore, a moral opposition to immoralities. I seek entirely to blunt the edge of the tyrant's sword, not by putting up against it a sharper-edged weapon, but by disappointing his expectation that I would be offering physical resistance. The resistance of the soul that I should offer instead would elude him. It would at first dazzle him and at last compel recognition from him which recognition would not humiliate him but would uplift him. It may be urged that this again is an ideal state. And so it is. The propositions from which I have drawn my arguments are as true as Euclid's definitions which are none the less true because in practice we are unable even to draw Euclid's line on a blackboard. But even a geometrician finds it impossible to get on without bearing in mind Euclid's definitions. Nor may we, the German friend, his colleagues and myself, dispense with the fundamental propositions on which the doctrine of satyagraha is based.

There remains for me now only one ticklish question to answer. In a most ingenious manner the writer has compared the English arrogation of the right of becoming tutors to the whole world to my views on relations between married people. But the comparison does not hold good. The marriage bond involves seeing each other only by mutual agreement. But surely abstention requires no consent. Married life would be intolerable, as it does become, when one partner breaks through all bonds of restraint. Marriage confirms the right of union between two partners to the exclusion of all the others when, in their joint opinion, they consider such union to be desirable, but it confers no right upon one partner to demand obedience of the other to one's wish for union. What should be done when one partner on moral or other grounds cannot conform to the wishes of the other is a separate question. Personally, if divorce was the only alternative I should not hesitate to accept it, rather than interrupt my moral progress, —assuming that I want to restrain myself on purely moral grounds.

Young India, 8-10-1925

170. "TAKLI" UNIVERSAL

It is wonderful what hold upon mankind the simple instrument *takli* has retained in spite of the inroads of spinning mills. Not only am I finding its use spread all over India but Dr. Ansari sent me a postcard in which a woman is portrayed comfortably seated with a *takli* plying in a little earthen pot which she has held in her right hand with the left holding the sliver from which she is drawing the thread. It is a picture of a scene in Beirut. The capacity of *takli* for giving use anywhere and at all odd times is really remarkable. A busy man who may find it difficult to sit down for half an hour at a stretch at the wheel cannot do better than carry a *takli* about him and spin his quota on the *takli*.

Young India, 8-10-1925

171. NOTES

President-elect

So Sarojini Devi has been elected President of the Congress for the ensuing year. It was an honour that was to have been done to her last year. It is thoroughly well-earned by her. It is due to her for her tireless energy, for her great services as the national ambassador in East and South Africa; and in these days of a steady awakening among women, it is a graceful tribute to India's womanhood for the Reception Committee to have elected as President one of India's most gifted daughters. Her election will give great satisfaction to our countrymen across the seas and give them courage to fight the battle that is in front of them. May her occupancy of the highest office in the gift of the nation result in freedom coming nearer to us.

Big Brother's Undertaking

Maulana Shaukat Ali is bent upon earning his position on the Council of the All-India Spinners' Association. He wants to justify his faith in khaddar by his work. Though he has done spinning more or less regularly before now, he will now insist upon doing it with the utmost possible regularity and supply me with his monthly quota. He has undertaken to enrol before the

end of the year at least 3,000 A class Muslim members. I have told the Maulana Saheb that enrolment of real 3,000 A class members before the end of the year will give me complete satisfaction. But I have told him also that it will tax his resources to the utmost to get 3,000 Mussalmans who not being professional spinners will spin regularly and deliver their yarn from month to month. There are not today in all India, 3,000 members, men and women, on the Congress register who have paid their full quota of 2,000 yards to date. It is tragic, but it is true. No doubt, the reduction to one half will make a change. Experience, however, shows that men will come willingly to do certain things at a pinch and in a fit of exaltation, but many will not do things with sustained regularity from day to day and month to month. And yet I am convinced that, before we can make substantial headway we shall have to get men who will regard it as a point of honour to fulfil long engagements undertaken by them for the sake of the nation. I therefore wish every success to the Maulana Saheb.

A HINDU PRESERVE?

The Maulana told me that a Mussalman friend warned him that the khaddar service under the Spinners' Association would be a Hindu preserve as it has been under the Khadi Board. He had already challenged the Mussalman friend because he himself knew that Mr. Banker had tried his best to get some Mussalman workers. I add my own experience. Wherever I have gone I have asked managers of khaddar organizations whether they have Mussalman workers with them and they have invariably complained of the difficulty of getting Mussalman workers for khaddar. Khadi Pratishthan has some but they belong to the humbler walks of life. The Abhoy Ashram has one or two. I cannot multiply these instances. The thing is that khadi service has not yet become a popular service. There is not much money to be had for service. In the figures I analysed some time ago the highest pay given was Rs. 150/- per month. That was paid to a very able organizer. The best khaddar workers are all volunteers everywhere. The terms of service must necessarily be stiff. You cannot have whole-time khaddar workers who do not themselves spin or habitually wear khaddar. I would love to have many Mussalmans of the right stamp offering their services. Let them all apply to the Maulana Saheb. He has undertaken to examine every case personally and make his recommendation to the Council. But I give due warning to all con-

cerned whether Mussalmans, Christians, Parsis or Jews, that they must not blame the Council if the khaddar service becomes a Hindu preserve for want of efforts, ability or love for khaddar on the part of the others.

Debts of Honour

I had some time ago in the pages of *Navajivan* to refer to the default on the part of Congress debtors in Gujarat. Now that I have taken up the burden of the All-India Spinners' Association, the first present I received was a list from Mr. Banker of 70 debtors to the Bihar Provincial Khadi Board. These are all debts of long standing incurred by Congressmen,—many of them are for khaddar sold. They amount to over Rs. 20,000. It is a matter of shame and sorrow that there should be so many debts outstanding. The Khadi Board has, in my opinion, been over-lenient. All public institutions are public trust and those who are in charge of them have oftentimes to harden their hearts and rigorously collect all debts owing to the trust under their charge. Leniency in the management of a public trust is a misplaced virtue and may often amount to an unpardonable breach. I know that a false notion of non-co-operation has often come in the way of proceedings being taken against defaulters. But as I have so often pointed out, laws are made by institutions for self-preservation, not for suicide. When, therefore, they hamper their growth they are worse than useless, and must be set aside. Boycott of law-courts was undertaken in order to invigorate the nation, to wean people from running on the slightest pretext to law-courts, to popularize private arbitration, never to bolster up fraud or cover defaulters. It proceeded upon the assumption that Congressmen would at least carry out their obligations to one another and to the Congress without the necessity of resort even to arbitration, much less to law-courts. I hope, therefore, that those gentlemen who owe anything to the Khadi Board will hasten to discharge their debts and will not put the Board to the painful necessity of taking proceedings against them.

Hints for Spinning Examiners

A correspondent who has evidently given some thought to the spinning-wheel makes the following suggestions:

> The training and the tests may be conducted on the following lines and the same method may be adopted in the spinning competition during the Congress Week also;

The art of spinning may be classified into 'carding', 'spinning proper' and 'mechanism'.

Carding Tests

1. Fineness of carding and outturn in a fixed time from the given ginned cotton.

2. Difference between hard and soft rolled slivers.

3. Uses of the different parts of carding-bow and the accessories.

Spinning Proper

1. Fineness and uniformity of yarn outturn in a fixed time from self-carded slivers and from any given carded slivers.

2. Ability to spin yarn of a given count (sample of which may be given).

3. Manipulation of the parts of the wheel,—uses of the different parts.

Mechanism (Practical)

1. A spinning-wheel out of use for some time (of course not requiring any carpentry work) may be asked to be set right.

2. A wheel with its parts slackened may be asked to be set right. Different patterns of wheels may be tried for the above purpose. (This is what is done in practical examinations of typewriting, levelling and other scientific instruments.)

As years pass on, the different tests may be gradually introduced in the competitions.

In the selection of persons to manage and conduct the affairs of the Spinners' Association men of tried character and tried sincerity have to be selected, so that this method at least may work to a success, unlike the previous attempts whose seeming failures are all due to want of workers of sincerity and selflessness. There are many undesirables who have already got into the existing national organizations and there are yet many just rising and scheming to get into this new organization also.

The suggestions for examiners are good. About undesirables one knows that democratic institutions, all the world over, run the risk of bad people getting into them. This fate will pursue such institutions till the millenium arrives and we have to reckon with the fact and provide accordingly. Since the Spinners' Association is designed to be not a democratic body with a fluctuating policy but a philanthropic commercial body, the democratic element has been kept under well-regulated checks. Even so there can be no absolute guarantee against bad men getting into even a self-appointed and selective, philanthropic corporation. One can only hope that the Spinners' Association will offer no attraction to the evil-minded people.

Lack of Moral Courage

A friend sends me the following cutting for reproduction in *Young India*:

> This lack of moral courage is a great evil in the church. Many, rather than contend against their superiors, will contend against God Himself. And they rid themselves of all responsibility by substituting their superiors' conscience for their own wherein God speaks. They do not understand that by striving against what is good, or by refraining from striving against what is evil, in obedience to their superiors, they give scandal to the world, they stain the Christian character in the eyes of the world. They do not understand that both their duty toward God and their duty toward their superiors may be fulfilled, by never striving against what is good, by never refraining from striving against what is evil, by never judging their superiors, by obeying them with perfect obedience in everything that is neither opposed to what is good nor in favour of what is evil, by laying even life itself at their feet, but not their conscience; their conscience, never! Thus the inferior, stripped of everything save conscience and just obedience, becomes a pure grain of the salt of the earth; and where many such grains are united, the substance to which they adhere will be saved from corruption, and that to which they do not adhere, will rot and fall to pieces.

This passage contains an echo of what many of us do every day, subordinating the clear voice of God to the voice of man, who for the time being exercises authority over us. We should be free in a moment if we could strike the happy medium and know when to yield to the voice of authority and when to resist it even at the risk of losing one's life.

Young India, 8-10-1925

172. MESSAGE TO "FORWARD"

KISHANGANJ,
October 10, 1925

I wish *Forward* many happy returns. The longer young men like Subhas Bose are denied the right of a fair trial and yet kept under lock and key, the quicker is our pace towards our goal. Fight for freedom is no mock affair. It is so real and so terrible that it will require the best of thousands of us. Let us not grudge the price.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 8050

173. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL

Saturday, October 10, 1925

BHAISHRI RAMNIKLAL,

Today on the train to Katihar, I read with interest your report[1] on the school. The train has stopped, people are starting but, taking no notice of them, I am writing to you.

The report brings out prominently to our notice the changes that have taken place among the teachers. But who can say which change could have been prevented? If we can even now undo them, we should.

Kaka's[2] grief causes grief to me also. How nice it would be if Kaka improves his health and while doing so forgets his grief! To a student of the *Gita* how could there be any sorrow or joy? But who can impart this wisdom? It seems one attains it only out of experience.

I am sending back the report. I quite approve of Kishorelal's[3] decision.

I hope both of you are at peace and in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 10683

174. IF EXPELLED FROM ONE'S COMMUNITY

When the leaders of a community thoughtlessly expel persons from it, guided by nothing but their unthinking attachment to ideas and customs, superstitions, ignorance and envy, it is better for one to be boycotted by it than to continue as a member of it, for no one who loves truth can remain in a society from which another such person has been expelled.

This is the principle. Although it cannot always be followed in practice, it needs to be borne in mind. We observe nowadays that heads of communities are becoming increasingly high-handed. There are heads who regard it as a sin even to serve a

[1] Report on the Ashram school for *Samvat* 1980-81, of the Vikram era
[2] Kaka Kalelkar
[3] Kishorelal Mashruwala

meal to an *Antyaja*. A Hindu who invites an *Antyaja* to sit with other Hindus at a dinner or consents to another doing this is regarded as having committed a sin. Let all lovers of goodness join the company of such sinners.

To be sure, boycott is not easy to bear. One is not served meals, and is denied the services of the dhobi, the barber and, it is not impossible, even of the doctor. They inflict every hardship, short of putting one to death. A reformer who is boycotted must have the strength to remain steadfast unto death. The best service to *Antyajas* can be rendered only by Hindus who have made their lives pure, dedicated their lives. What does it matter whether one is served meals or not? Why cannot we stay at home, cook our own food and eat in peace? If the dhobi refuses to wash our clothes, we may wash them ourselves and save money. Shaving oneself has now become a common practice. Yes, but how to find a match for one's daughter, and a bride for one's son, it will be asked. If we are particular that the partner for either should be from our own community and cannot find one, the daughter or the son should cultivate self-control. If they do not have the strength for this, we should look for a partner in some other community. If we are disappointed even in this, we should resign ourselves to what cannot be helped.

There are only four castes, whether communities mumber four or forty thousand. The merger of sub-divisions in communities is something to be actually welcomed. Small social circles with rigid barriers have done great harm to Hinduism. Why should not a Vaisya try to enter into marriage alliance with another Vaisya in any part of the country? Why should a Brahmin of Gujarat not look for a son-in-law or daughter-in-law in any Brahmin family of the same level of culture as his? If we lack the courage even for this reform Hinduism will be in danger of becoming a religion of extremely narrow outlook. A Gujarati girl marrying in Bengal or a Bengali girl marrying in Gujarat is not altogether a calamity. If those who wish to preserve the division of society into four castes also try to preserve the present sub-divisions into communities, the former will disappear along with the latter, which are already disappearing.

Today, even the division into four castes has lost its sanction. Thinking men and women ought to consider this problem. As a first step, if the various castes in Gujarat meet and decide to enlarge the boundaries of social intercourse within them, will not that be great progress? Can they not decide to merge the communities which form their sub-divisions?

If the heads of these communities have no desire even to think over this problem, it is very necessary that individuals should take the lead.

But I wished to discuss in this article the question of social boycott. If I have written about the sub-divisions of castes, it is for the comfort of the victims of boycott. There is only one way to fight tyranny, whether it is by our own people or by others. The victim of boycott has at present a very simple way open to him. Let us, however, suppose that in the existing atmosphere in the country a person boycotted by his sub-division of the caste will be boycotted by the entire caste. Even if it is so, what does it matter? We need today all over the country reformers who will cultivate the strength to stand alone.

Anyone, however, who shows the courage to do this will be, if his motive is pure, free from anger and ill will, will bear hardships in patience, will not hate the oppressor, wish well even to him and minister to him when an opportunity offers. No one should, in any circumstances, forsake his duty of service. No one, indeed, has a right to exact service from others. Dharma says: "I am nothing but service. The Creator has given me no rights at all." How can one lose what one does not possess? The victim of boycott should give up all desire to be served by others. There is, most certainly, a peculiar law that some will come forward to offer their services to such a person, but the worker himself will remain unconcerned whether or not anybody does so. Anyone who claims that he wants no service, hoping all the time that some people will offer to serve him, is a thief and is bound to be disappointed in his hope.

Workers who would serve *Antyajas*, be as humble as the dust under your feet and let people harass you if they choose. The earth, though we ever trample her under our feet, is all forgiveness, and that is why we call her mother and sing to her every morning as we wake up.

> Divine one, you who are Vishnu's spouse, I bow unto you with the seas of the world a garment round your body and the mountains your breasts. Forgive us that we tread on you with our feet.

Workers who have learnt perfect humility from such a mother will suffer no harm by being boycotted.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-10-1925

175. *MEANING OF THE "GITA"*

A friend puts the following question:[1]

Such doubts will continue to arise. Those who have made some study [of the *Gita*] should try to resolve them to the best of their ability. I will try to do so, but I must say at the same time that in the last resort man acts according to the dictates of his heart. The heart takes precedence over the intellect. The principle is accepted first, and proof follows afterwards. Inspiration precedes the arguments with which we justify it. That is why it is said that the intellect is led by one's actions. Man discovers arguments in favour of what he wants to do or has done.

I can, therefore, understand that my interpretation of the *Gita* may not be acceptable to everyone. In these circumstances, I think it should suffice if I describe how I arrived at my interpretation of the *Gita* and explain the principles which I have followed in determining the meaning of Shastras. "My duty is to fight, and be unconcerned with the result. The enemies who deserve to die are dead already, my part is simply to be an instrument in killing them."

I became acquainted with the *Gita* in 1889. I was twenty years of age at that time. I had not yet fully understood the significance of non-violence as a principle of dharma. It was from Shamal Bhatt's couplet, "Let him offer water, and a good meal to eat", that I had first learnt the principle of winning over even an enemy with love. Its truth had made a deep appeal to my heart, but the couplet had not suggested to me the principle of compassion for all creatures. I had even eaten meat before that time while I was still in India. I believed that it was one's duty to kill snakes and other such creatures. I remember having killed bed-bugs and other insects. I remember killing a scorpion once. Today I think that we should not kill even such poisonous creatures. In those days I believed that we would have to fit ourselves to fight the British. I used to murmur to myself the lines of the poem beginning, "Is it any wonder that the British rule over us?" My eating meat was for the purpose of fitting

[1] The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had argued that chapters I and XI of the *Gita* did not seem to support Gandhiji's view that it taught non-violence.

myself for this fighting in future. These were the views I held before I left for England. It was my desire to keep, even at the cost of my life, the promises which I had given to my mother that saved me from eating meat and other sins. My love of truth has saved me in many difficult situations.

It was at this time that, coming into contact with two Englishmen, I was induced to read the *Gita*. I say "induced" because I had no particular desire to read it. When these two friends asked me to read the *Gita* with them, I felt rather ashamed. The consciousness that I knew nothing about our holy books made me feel miserable. The reason, I think, was my vanity. I did not know Sanskrit well enough to be able to read the *Gita* without help. The two English friends, on their part, did not know Sanskrit at all. They gave me Sir Edwin Arnold's excellent translation of the poem. I went through the whole of it immediately and was fascinated by it. From that time till now, the last nineteen stanzas of Chapter II have ever remained engraved in my heart. For me, they contain the essence of dharma. They embody the highest knowledge. The principles enunciated in them are immutable. The intellect, too, is active in them in the highest degree, but it is intellect disciplined to high purpose. The knowledge which they contain is the fruit of experience.

This was my first introduction to the *Gita*. Since then, I have read many other translations and commentaries and listened to many discourses but the impression made by that first reading persists. These stanzas are the key to the understanding of the *Gita*. I would even go so far as to advise people to reject statements in the poem which bear a meaning contrary to that of these nineteen stanzas. For a person who is humble there can be no question of rejecting anything. He will merely reason: 'It is the imperfection of my own intellect that today other stanzas seem to me inconsistent with these. In the course of time, I shall be able to see their consistency.' So he will tell himself and others, and leave the matter there.

For understanding the meaning of the Shastras, one must have a well-cultivated moral sensibility and experience in the practice of their truths. The injunction against Sudras studying the Vedas is not altogether unjustified. A Sudra, in other words a person without moral education, without sense and without knowledge, would completely misread the Shastras. No person, even if grown up in age, is qualified to understand difficult problems in Algebra without preparation. Before anyone can understand such problems, he must have studied the elements of

the subject. How would "*Aham Brahmasmi*"[1] sound in the mouth of a lustful man? What meaning, or distorted meaning, would he not attach to it?

Hence, anyone who offers to interpret the Shastras must have observed the prescribed disciplines in his life. A mechanical observance of these disciplines is as futile as it is difficult. The Shastras regard it essential that one should have a guru. But gurus are rare in this age and, therefore, wise men of learning advise regular study of books in regional languages which are steeped in the spirit of devotion. Those, however, who are devoid of this spirit and lack even faith, are not qualified to explain the meaning of the Shastras. Learned men may please themselves and draw seemingly profound meanings from the Shastras, but what they offer is not the real sense of these. Only those who have experience in the practice of their truths can explain the real meaning of the Shastras.

There are, however, principles for the guidance of the common man too. Any interpretation of a Shastra which is opposed to truth cannot be right. The Shastras are not meant for those who question the validity of the principle of truth itself, or, rather, the Shastras are no better than ordinary books for such a person. No one can meet him in argument. Anyone, on the other hand, who does not find the principle of non-violence in the Shastras is indeed in danger, but his case is not hopeless. Truth is a positive value, while non-violence is a negative value. Truth affirms. Non-violence forbids something which is real enough. Truth exists, untruth does not exist. Violence exists, non-violence does not. Even so, the highest dharma for us is that nothing but non-violence can be. Truth is its own proof, and non-violence is its supreme fruit. The latter is necessarily contained in the former. Since, however, it is not evident as truth is, one may try to discover the meaning of the Shastras without believing in it. But the spirit of non-violence alone will reveal to one the true meaning of the Shastras.

Tapascharya is certainly necessary for the realization of truth. Some sage who had realized truth revealed to the world the goddess of non-violence from amidst the prevailing violence, and said: "Violence comes of illusion; it avails not. Non-violence alone is true." Without non-violence, it is not possible to realize truth. The vows of *brahmacharya*, non-stealing and non-possession

[1] "I am the *Brahman*, the Absolute", the central teaching of Advaita Vedanta

are of importance for the sake of non-violence, they help one to realize it in oneself. It is the life-breath of truth. Without it, man is a beast. The seeker after truth will discover all this very early in his quest, and then he will have no difficulty at any time in understanding the meaning of Shastras.

The second rule to be followed in determining the meaning of a text in a Shastra is that one should not stick to its letter, but try to understand its spirit, its meaning in the total context. Tulsidas's *Ramayana* is one of the greatest works because its spirit is that of purity, compassion and devotion to God. An evil fate awaits one who beats his wife because Tulsidas has said in his work that a Sudra, a dull-witted person, a beast and a woman merit chastisement. Rama not only never raised his hand against Sita, he did not even displease her at any time. Tulsidas merely stated a common belief. He could never have thought that there would be brutes who might beat their wives and justify their action by reference to his verse. May be Tulsidas himself, following the practice of his time, used to beat his wife; what even then? The practice does not cease to be reprehensible. In any case, his *Ramayana* was not composed to justify men beating their wives. It was composed to display the character of a perfect man, to tell us about Sita, the noblest among chaste and devoted wives, and to delineate the ideal devotion of Bharat. The support which the work seems to lend to evil customs should be ignored. Tulsidas did not compose his priceless work to teach geography. We should, therefore, reject any erroneous statements of a geographical character which we may find in it.

Let us now examine the *Gita*. Its subject-matter is simply the realization of *Brahman* and the means thereto; the battle is only the occasion for its teaching. One can say, if one likes, that the poet used it as an occasion because he did not look upon war as morally wrong. On reading the *Mahabharata*, I formed quite a different impression. Vyasa wrote his supremely beautiful epic to depict the futility of war. What did the Kauravas' defeat and the Pandavas' victory avail? How many among the victors survived? What was their fate? What was the end of Kunti, mother of the Pandavas? What trace is left today of the Yadava race?

Since the *Gita's* subject is not description of the battle and justification of violence, it is perfectly wrong to give much importance to these. If, moreover, it is difficult to reconcile a few of the verses with the idea that the *Gita* advocates non-violence, it is still more difficult to reconcile the teaching of the work as a whole with the advocacy of violence.

When a poet composes his work, he does not have a clear conception of all its possible implications. It is the very beauty of a good poem that it is greater than its author. The truth which a poet utters in his moment of inspiration, we do not often see him following in his own life. Hence the lives of many poets are at variance with the teaching of their poems. That the overall teaching of the *Gita* is not violence but non-violence is evident from the argument which begins in Chapter II and ends in Chapter XVIII. The intervening chapters propound the same theme. Violence is simply not possible unless one is driven by anger, by ignorant love and by hatred. The *Gita*, on the other hand, wants us to be incapable of anger and attain to a state unaffected by the three *gunas*[1]. Such a person can never feel anger. I see even now the red eyes of Arjuna every time he aimed an arrow from his bow, drawing the string as far as his ear.

But, then, had Arjuna's obstinate refusal to fight anything to do with non-violence? In fact, he had fought often enough in the past. On the present occasion, his reason was suddenly clouded by ignorant attachment. He did not wish to kill his kinsmen. He did not say that he would not kill anyone even if he believed that person to be wicked. Shri Krishna is the Lord dwelling in everyone's heart. He understands the momentary darkening of Arjuna's reason. He, therefore, tells him: "You have already committed violence. By talking now like a wise man, you will not learn non-violence. Having started on this course, you must finish the job." If a passenger travelling in a train which is running at a speed of forty miles an hour suddenly feels aversion to travelling and jumps out of the train, he will have but committed suicide. He has not in truth realized the futility of travelling as such or of travelling by train. Arjuna was in a similar condition. Krishna, who believed in non-violence, could not have given Arjuna any advice other than what he did. But to conclude from this that the *Gita* teaches violence or justifies war is as unwarranted as to argue that, since violence in some form or other is inescapable for maintaining the body in existence, dharma lies only in violence. The man of discriminating intellect, on the other hand, teaches the duty of striving for deliverance from this body which exists through violence, the duty, that is, of striving for *moksha*.

[1] *Sattva* (purity or clarity), *rajas* (restlessness) and *tamas* (torpidity)

But whom does Dhritarashtra represent, and likewise Duryodhana, Yudhishthira, or Arjuna? Whom does Krishna represent? Were they historical personages? Does the *Gita* relate their actual doings? Is it likely that Arjuna should suddenly, without warning, ask a question when the battle was about to commence, and that Krishna should recite the whole *Gita* in reply? And then, Arjuna, who had said that his ignorance had been dispelled, forgets what he was taught in the *Gita*, and Krishna is made to repeat his teaching in the *Anugita*[1].

Personally, I believe that Duryodhana and his supporters stand for the Satanic impulses in us, and Arjuna and others stand for God-ward impulses. The battle-field is our body. The poet-seer, who knows from experience the problems of life, has given a faithful account of the conflict which is eternally going on within us. Shri Krishna is the Lord dwelling in everyone's heart who is ever murmuring His promptings in a pure *chitta*[2] like a clock ticking in a room. If the clock of the *chitta* is not wound up with the key of self-purification, the in-dwelling Lord no doubt remains where He is, but the ticking is heard no more.

I do not wish to suggest that violence has no place at all in the teaching of the *Gita*. The dharma which it teaches does not mean that a person who has not yet awakened to the truth of non-violence may act like a coward. Anyone who fears others, accumulates possessions and indulges in sense-pleasures will certainly fight with violent means, but violence does not, for that reason, become justified as his dharma. There is only one dharma. Non-violence means *moksha*, and *moksha* means realizing Satyanarayana[3]. But this dharma does not under any circumstances countenance running away in fear. In this world which baffles our reason, violence there will then always be. The *Gita* shows the way which will lead us out of it, but it also says that we cannot escape it simply by running away from it like cowards. Anyone who prepares to run away would do better, instead, to kill and be killed.

If the verses cited by the correspondent cannot be understood even after this explanation, I cannot explain them. I am sure no one doubts that God, who is omnipotent, is, and must be, the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer of the Universe. He who creates has certainly the right to destroy. Even so, He does

[1] Epilogue to the *Gita*
[2] Mind-stuff
[3] Truth as God; God in the form of Truth

not kill, for He does nothing. God is so merciful He does not violate the law that every creature that is born will die one day. If He were to follow His fancies and whims, where should we be?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-10-1925

176. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

Sunday [*October 11, 1925*][1]

BHAI DAHYABHAI,

I was able to read your letter[2] today. Its purport is: that the khadi activity has not been carried on properly in Gujarat, that we cannot reach villages through the spinning-wheel, that workers are so in name only and that for the sake of mere polemics I put aside Dr. Sumant's[3] proposal.

I think we could have improved the khadi activity in Gujarat, but when everyone was inexperienced, whom could we blame? No one has done wrong intentionally.

I am unable to give up the faith that we can really reach the villages through the spinning-wheel alone. Where the people starve, this is the only means of relief. Where the people are well-off but lazy, it is the only thing which will rid them of their laziness. Its partial failure is only because very few with faith in it have stayed in the villages.

Those who have been working in Gujarat are not workers in name only. If your allegation is against Laxmidas[4], you do not know him. With his wife and daughter he has dedicated himself to the work. In which Ashram except Satyagraha Ashram have lakhs been wasted? But all its accounts are clear. In Bardoli[5] there was certainly waste of money on the building but it was due to lack of experience. In Sarbhon[6] there was no extra expense. In Godhra[7] extra money was spent but it will bear fruit,

[1] The postmark bears the date 12-10-1925.

[2] The long letter mentioned in the previous letter to the addressee, dated 7-10-1925

[3] Dr. Sumant Mehta, who had proposed that volunteers should be given systematic training in social service

[4] Laxmidas Asar

[5] & [6] Villages in the Surat district of Gujarat where buildings of Swaraj Ashrams had lately been built

[7] A town in Gujarat where, too, an ashram building for Harijans had just been constructed

because how else can the untouchables have such a building? If you would present the matter more clearly I could explain it better.

I did not brush aside Dr. Sumant's suggestion for the sake of polemics. How could I do so when I am proud of Dr. Sumant and when I would not disregard even a child's suggestion? But what to do when I don't understand something? I acted according to my knowledge. If the Satyagraha Ashram is not a Sevak Samaj[1] what else is it? How could I shape it better than I knew. I wish we had other societies, too, but who should do this work—they who know better or I?

The fact is that you have not realized my limitations. I am not omnipotent. I do not reserve my strength, but use it fully; what more can I do?

I shall definitely go to Dholka, unless God wills it otherwise. When I reach the Ashram, you may join me so that we may reduce our worries. Do not reply to this, but argue it out with me when we meet.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2693. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

177. LETTER TO A WORKER IN LUCKNOW

[PATNA,]
October 12, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have a wire complaining that I am disturbing the Sitapur programme. I had your wire also. I, therefore, wired to you to the effect that your programme should be framed subject to confirmation by the committee at Sitapur. I must, however, confess that even if there is an interval of five hours at Lucknow, I should be allowed that time for rest. But if such is not possible, you should send me to Sitapur by motor and not keep me engaged for five hours at Lucknow. A train journey is preferable to a motor ride but a motor ride is preferable to work till a late hour. I have grown so weak that I am washed out at 7 p.m. When I attend meetings at night I yawn. Now you know all about me and my wish and you may do what you think is

[1] Servants' society

best in the public interest. For I have no stomach left for addresses. Better ask me to give a spinning demonstration.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 7750

178. LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH

October 12, 1925

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. I am writing to Chi. Chhaganlal about the Rs. 1,000. Tell Devchandbhai to ask me when I am in Kutch[1] about the meeting of the Parishad Committee[2].

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Is your mother all right?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2871. Courtesy: Fulchand Shah

179. SPEECH AT VISHANPUR[3]

October 13, 1925

In his reply Mahatmaji said, with other things, that it was not quite happy on the part of the reception committee to have made allegations against Darbhanga Raj without sufficient proofs and specially in an address, but if they had really any grievances, they ought to try to get them removed.

The Searchlight, 16-10-1925

[1] Gandhiji was in Kutch from October 22 to November 3.

[2] Executive Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference

[3] According to the report, the reception by a disciplined, fifty-thousand strong gathering at this important interior village in the Purnia district of Bihar was attended with pageantry in which scores of elephants and horses featured long a two-mile, specially-constructed road. Gandhiji was presented an address of welcome and contributions were made to the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund.

180. BIHAR NOTES

Hindu-Muslim Question

From Patna we went to Bhagalpur. At Bhagalpur there was a very great public meeting at which I was obliged to make a somewhat lengthy reference to the Hindu-Muslim question. Though my influence over those who are agitating the question is gone, they continue to discuss with me the various problems arising from it. I felt, therefore, that I should redeclare my views for what they might be worth. Apart from merits I must confess that I have not liked this constant reference to the Government by both the parties on matters which they by mutual settlement or appeal to the sword can adjust. I, therefore, told the audience that since neither party was prepared to compromise and each was afraid of the other, the best way would be without seeking the intervention of the Government to settle the matters in dispute by the method of the lathi. Retreat out of fear was cowardice and cowardice would not hasten a settlement or the advent of non-violence. Cowardice was a species of violence which it was most difficult to overcome. One could hope to persuade a violently inclined person to shed his violence and take up the superior force of non-violence, but since cowardice was a negation of all force, it was impossible to teach a mouse non-violence in respect of a cat. He would simply not understand what non-violence could be, because he had not the capacity for violence against the cat. Would it not be a mockery to ask a blind man not to look at ugly things? Maulana Shaukat Ali and I were at Bettiah in 1921. The people of a village near Bettiah told me that they had run away whilst the police were looting their houses and molesting their womenfolk.[1] When they said that they had run away because I had told them to be non-violent, I hung my head in shame. I assured them that such was not the meaning of my non-violence. I expected them to intercept the mightiest power that might be in the act of harming those who were under their protection, and draw without retaliation all harm upon their own heads even to the point of death, but never to run away from the storm centre. It was manly enough to defend one's property, honour or religion at the point of sword. It was manlier and nobler to defend them without seeking to injure the wrongdoer. But it was unmanly,

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 88-91.

unnatural and dishonourable to forsake the post of duty and in order to save one's skin to leave property, honour or religion to the mercy of the wrongdoer. I could see my way of successfully delivering the message of ahimsa to those who knew how to die, not to those who were afraid of death. I told the audience further, that those like me who deliberately did not want to fight and were powerless to effect a settlement might follow the example of those Mussalmans who, during the time of the first four Caliphs, sought the refuge of the cave when brothers began to fight one against the other. The mountain cave in these days was a practical impossibility but they could retire to the cave which each of us carried within himself. But such could be only those who had mutual regard for one another's religion and customs.

Folly of Excommunication

Then there was a Provincial Marwari Sammelan where I spoke on the question of social boycott and on the crying need of social reform. I told the Marwari friends that excommunication was a lawful weapon in the hands only of those who deserved to be classed as *mahajan*, which meant pure men who were real representatives of their respective groups or castes and who declared excommunication not from personal spite but from the selfless motive of conserving the interest of fellow beings. It was an immoral abuse of power to put under the ban of excommunication a person who for the sake of learning or legitimate gain crossed the waters or who for the sake of obtaining a suitable match for his son or daughter went outside his sub-caste or who dared to remarry his widowed daughter of tender age. If *varnashrama* which had a useful and proper place in the Hindu social system was to be rescued from destruction it was high time that the innumerable sub-divisions were fused into one. There was, for instance, no reason why a Marwari Brahmin or Vaisya should not seek marriage relations with a Bengali Brahmin or Vaisya. The *mahajan* to be truly great will have to encourage rather than suppress tendencies towards fusion.

If excommunication was ever deserved nowadays, it was deserved by those who gave away their daughters in marriage before they were full-grown, at least before they were sixteen, and if secret immorality was to be discountenanced, it was the duty of child parents of widows to encourage their remarriage.

The "Pandas"

From Bhagalpur we motored to Banka where there was a district conference presided over by Maulana Shaffi Sahib. There

was nothing noteworthy here except for the huge and embarrassing crowds through which I passed with difficulty with my bruised toe. We went thence to Devgarh otherwise known as Vaidyanath Dham. This is not only a famous place of pilgrimage, but also a health resort beautifully situated and surrounded by hills. This is a favourite place with the Bengalis. Unlike as in other places of pilgrimage, I found here the *pandas*, i.e., the priests in charge of the shrines, to be a fairly cultured body of men. The majority of volunteers were smart *panda* youths who rendered great assistance, I was told, to the pilgrims. There are several educated men amongst them, one being even a High Court pleader. I had the pleasure too of a visit from the elderly *pandas*. They wanted me to tell them what they should do to serve the people and, when I told them that they should serve the pilgrims instead of seeking to profiteer at their expense, and endeavour to make the places of pilgrimage really holy places by themselves leading pure and restrained lives, they readily agreed and there seemed to me to be a ring of sincerity about their assent to my proposals and a humble recognition of the existence of the evils I had ventured to point out. I was agreeably surprised to discover that the great temple was open to the so-called untouchables. The usual women's meeting was arranged in the spacious temple compound just opposite the shrine. The order kept by the *panda* volunteers wherever I went in Devgarh was certainly much better than I have observed elsewhere.

Virtue of Suffering

The public meeting was so well organized as to ensure perfect quiet. The public address made pointed reference to terrible sufferings that the people of this district underwent in 1921-22. It should be noted here that this is the district called Santhal Parganas. It is a Non-Regulation part of Bihar. The Commissioner's will is therefore the law of the land. The address also referred to the fact that whereas during 1921 and 1922 the drink habit had all but disappeared, it was again making headway amongst the *Santhals*. The possibilities of khaddar were stated to be very great. In my reply I pointed out that no nation had ever come to its own without much suffering. I, therefore, did not mind the sufferings that the people underwent in 1921-22. Only suffering to be beneficial must be voluntary and must be enjoyed. When it came, such suffering left the sufferer stronger and happier at the end of it. I was, therefore, grieved to discover that the suffering in the district had caused demoralization amongst the people. It

meant that all the suffering was not voluntary. It was up to the workers to set an example in pure and voluntary suffering. There should be persistent agitation amongst *Santhals* against the drink habit and the charkha work should be systematically organized.

Two Pictures

There was, too, a separate presentation of an address by the Municipality. I take note of this event especially for the exceedingly tasteful but simple arrangements made for the presentation in the open air. The attendance was evidently regulated by tickets and was confined to so few that the audience could have been easily accommodated in any commodious building. But the Commissioners chose to erect a little *pandal* decorated with foliage tastefully arranged in the midst of beautiful natural scenery. I could not, therefore, help recalling in my reply to the address of the Municipality the dirty state of the road leading to the temple and the dilapidation surrounding it. I have visited almost all the places of pilgrimage in India, and everywhere the condition in and about the temples is deplorable—disorder, dirt, din and stench. All these are probably less marked in Devgarh than elsewhere. But all the same the contrast between the temple surroundings and the place where the address was presented was painful. If the Municipality, the *pandas* and the pilgrims combined together, they could make the temple and its precincts beautiful, sweet-smelling and uplifting as they ought to be. If honest and proper management could be assured, I had no doubt, I told them, that the rich pilgrims would gladly pay for the comfort that they would get at such holy places.

Useless and Ugly

From Devgarh we proceeded to Kharagdeha which is reached through Giridih from where it is a motor ride of 26 miles. At this place the programme began with a meeting of ladies. Hitherto I have restrained myself from criticizing the heavily ornamental decoration of some of my fair audiences, oppressive though it has often appeared to me. But the bangled arms from wrist practically to elbow, the huge thick nose-rings with about a three-inch diameter which could with difficulty be suspended from two holes, proved beyond endurance, and I gently remarked that this heavy ornamentation added nothing to the beauty of person, caused much discomfort, must often lead to disease and was, I could plainly see, a repository of dirt. I had never seen so much ornamentation anywhere else. Heavier articles I have seen, as for

instance the unbearable heavy ankle-hoops—I cannot call them rings—of Kathiawar ladies, but never so much body space covered over with so many bangles and what-nots. I was told that these huge nose-rings often resulted in cutting the delicate nasal membranes. I was nervous about the effect my very straight remarks would produce upon my gentle audience. I was, therefore, considerably relieved when at the end of my speech and in response to my appeal for Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, they crowded round me and gave liberally from their purses. I took care to drive my point home to every donor individually and asked her to give up a large part of her superfluous ornaments. The ladies received my remarks with a gracious smile and some of them even gave me a part of these ornaments. I do not know whether the quality and the quantity of adornment has anything to do with the development of character. That it has something to do with the intellect can be proved from innumerable instances. That it has connection with culture as distinguished from character is also obvious. But as I put character before even culture, I wonder whether I would be always right in making use, for advocating reform in the art of decoration, of the privilege I enjoy of addressing thousands of women in all the different parts of India. Be that as it may, I would urge upon the parents and husbands of these simple folk, on grounds of economy and health, the necessity of inducing among them a considerable reduction in these articles of personal furniture.

Mahuris

It was at this place that I made the acquaintance of Mahuris, otherwise known as Mathuris, a body of Vaisyas who, generations ago, are supposed to have migrated from Mathura and the surrounding country and settled in Bihar. They are fairly well-to-do and enterprising. Their chief occupation is commerce. Some of them are staunch reformers. They have taken to khaddar and appreciate its advantages for the poor people. Many of them have given up meat and drink which they used to take before. In their address they stated that they understood the movement of non-co-operation as purely one of self-purification, and that it had revolutionized their inner life. They take little or no part in politics but they are intent upon making all kinds of reforms in their own little community. This moral effect of non-co-operation upon so many people all over India is perhaps its most enduring result. It is fraught with consequences of which we can have as yet but little notion. Similar reforms were reported

to me as having taken place also amongst the *Santhals*, many of whom have become, from having been habitual drunkards, complete teetotallers. That movement among them received a check when picketing was withdrawn, but it is again reviving without the element of violence which had crept into the movement in 1921. It will be the saving of the simple but ignorant races like the *Santhals* if they can be weaned from the drink habit.

Young India, 15-10-1925

181. NATIONAL EDUCATION

During my travels, those who are interested in national education tell me that, whereas I constantly harp upon khaddar, untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity, nowadays one rarely finds mention even of national education in *Young India*. As a matter of fact the statement is true, but it must not be cited as a ground of complaint against me, if only because I am directly interested in the largest national university in India. But national education is not a thing which can now be advanced by any writing on my part. Its advance depends totally upon a proper working of the institutions now in existence. We cannot, we must not, any longer appeal to the youth of the country who are now receiving education in the Government institutions to leave them for they now know the pros and cons of the subject. They are in Government institutions either out of weakness or out of their fondness for them or for their want of faith in national institutions. Whatever the reason, the only way to deal with their weakness, fondness or want of faith is to make the national institutions strong and popular by sheer force of the character and ability of the teachers.

There is before me an appeal by the South Calcutta National School. In a covering letter, I am reminded that I paid during my prolonged stay in Calcutta a hurried visit to the institution. The appeal is signed by influential men. Hand-spinning, I am reminded, is compulsory. There are one hundred boys on the rolls and eighteen teachers, so the appeal runs. The school receives an annual grant of Rs. 200. There are many such institutions throughout the length and breadth of India from whose teachers I receive requests either for advertising them in these columns or, better still, becoming signatory to a direct appeal for funds. I must not yield to the temptation, even at the risk of overlooking some very deserving institutions. A hurried visit and an im-

pression created by such a visit must not be allowed to harm an institution if the impression is bad. Nor must a false but favourable impression be allowed to bolster up an institution that is in reality undeserving. It is my settled conviction that no deserving institution ever dies for want of support. Institutions that have died have done so either because there was nothing in them to commend them to the public or because those in control have themselves lost faith or, which is perhaps the same thing, lost stamina. I would, therefore, urge the conductors of this and other such institutions not to give in because of the general depression. It is a time of test for worthy institutions. There are several at the present moment in India which are struggling against the heaviest odds, where, though the teachers are living in want, they have faith in themselves and their cause. I know that they will prosper in the end and be the stronger for the ordeal they are passing through. I would advise the public to study such institutions and support them if they find them desirable and deserving.

I have observed in many institutions I have visited a tendency to patronize spinning because it has become somewhat of a fashion nowadays. It is far from doing justice to a great cause or to pupils. If spinning is to be revived as an indispensable industry, it must be treated seriously and must be taught in a proper and scientific manner like the other subjects taught in well-managed schools. The wheels will then be in perfectly good order and condition, will conform to all the tests laid down in these columns from time to time, the pupils' work would be regularly tested from day to day just as all their exercises would be or should be. And this is impossible unless all the teachers will learn the art with its technique. It is a waste of money to have a spinning expert. Every teacher has to become one if spinning has to be effectively taught, and if the teacher believes in the necessity of spinning, he can learn it without any difficulty in a month's time if he would give two hours to it daily. But I have said that whilst charkha spinning may be taught so as to enable boys and girls if they wish to use the spinning-wheel in their own homes, for class-spinning the *takli* is the most economical and the most profitable instrument. It is any day better that five hundred boys spin twenty-five yards each for half an hour at a stated time daily than fifty boys at intervals spinning one hundred yards each in the same half hour. Five hundred boys will spin 12,500 yards daily on the *takli* against 5,000 of fifty boys on the charkha.

Young India, 15-10-1925

182. ABOUT EDUCATED CLASSES

A friend has handed me during my tour in Bihar the following questions for answers through these columns:

> You complain that the educated classes in India do not follow your lead and have gone out of your hands. Is it not due to the fact that you threw them overboard at the very beginning of the movement and demanded impossible sacrifices from them?

I do not know that I have complained about the educated class not following my lead. If anything, I have complained of my own failure to convince that class as a body of the truth of my essential position. To say that I threw the educated class overboard at any time is to misunderstand me. Does a reformer ever throw anybody overboard? He simply invites people to join him in a particular reform. He begins with his own conversion. In other words, he isolates himself from society and remains in that condition till society sees the virtue of reform, and it is not the fault of the society if its heart or head cannot understand or appreciate a particular reform. There is obviously something wanting in the reform or the reformer if he does not get the members of the society to which he belongs to take up his reform. I suppose it must be admitted that the sacrifices that the new movement demanded were impossible for the educated class as a whole, and yet are not the exceptional cases brilliant?

> If we remember aright, in the beginning of the movement you gave out that you did not care for the intelligentsia if the masses were with you. If this is correct, have you now modified your views? If so, what are you doing or intend doing now to bring the intelligentsia to your views?

I hope I never "gave out" that I "did not care for the intelligentsia". A reformer cannot afford to say or do so. But I did say and do hold even now that if the masses take up the spirit of non-co-operation, swaraj is attainable even without the educated classes. For the masses the chief thing they have to do in that line is to non-co-operate with foreign and mill-spun cloth and establish closest co-operation with cloth of their own spinning and weaving. Unfortunately even this very simple-looking thing cannot be done without the aid of the educated class. I gratefully and fully confess that if hundreds of educated

men and women were not helping me in spreading the message of the spinning-wheel and khaddar, it would not have made the progress it has, and if the progress is not as fast as it might be, it is because the educated class as a whole stands aside from the khaddar movement.

> Are you seriously of opinion that the masses are with you or they simply applaud you as a Mahatma, little caring for your advice?

I do believe that the masses are wholly with me mentally. But they lack the heart to do what their mind approves. I have examined thousands upon this point and every one of them without exception practically has said, "What can we do? We understand what you say. But we lack the strength for it. Give us the strength to do it." If the strength was in my gift, the masses would have been transformed by now. But I know my helplessness in that direction. God alone can give the strength which they vainly seek from me.

> Do you think the masses can be so organized as to be thoroughly fitted for mass civil disobedience and are they not always liable to run amok and kill any political movement by their over-enthusiasm and indiscipline?

I do believe, in spite of appearances to the contrary, that the masses can be thoroughly organized for mass civil disobedience, that is to say, more quickly than for violence. I draw the distinction between spasmodic, sporadic and senseless violence and organized mass violence. To turn India into a military camp like, say, Germany, is in my opinion a work of ages, whereas to teach the people in an organized manner to remain passive, that is, pacific under suffering, is comparatively an easier task. This was demonstrated in a most marvellous manner in 1921 in spite of the aberrations at Bombay, Chauri Chaura, and elsewhere. But I freely confess that I have myself despaired of being able to organize the country for mass civil disobedience in the near future. The reasons for it I need not enter into. But this I know that, if India is to attain swaraj in terms of the masses, it will only attain it through developing capacity for mass civil disobedience. The last part of the question betrays the questioner's want of faith in the masses or impatience with them. How long have we been in touch with the masses to enable us to accuse them of indiscipline and over-enthusiasm? It is a crime of which we are perhaps more guilty than the masses. I see it verified even during the progress of my tour in Bihar. The workers have realized that my health will not stand the strain of noise and bustle; they have

been previously preparing the huge crowds that gather at every place to remain perfectly noiseless and undemonstrative save by their presence, and to my agreeable astonishment the people are responding nobly here as they did in Bengal. Such is the universal experience of workers who have established any touch with the masses.

> What steps are you taking to organize and discipline the masses?

The only step that I or anybody can take to organize and discipline the masses is to serve them selflessly, and this service is possible only through khaddar.

> Are you not fully aware of the introduction of many undesirable elements in the Congress organization? If so, what steps are you taking to purge the movement of such undesirable elements?

I am aware of the unfortunate fact. It is the fate of every democratic organization. It is useless, therefore, to address the question to me or to any single individual as to what steps he or she is taking. All who consider themselves to be "desirable elements" must make a combined effort to keep the Congress organization pure.

> Are you not aware that most of those who gave up their only source of livelihood in order to follow your lead have been thrown over their family and society as so many drones to be maintained and supported by their better circumstanced relatives; if so, how are you going to remedy this defect?

I am unable to endorse the view the writer takes. There are a few cases in which there is great suffering no doubt. But that is due to the parties being unable to revise their standard of life and curtail their expenditure. In their case they have preferred to suffer and be maintained by relatives and friends to returning to legal practice or to service. In my opinion their choice carries no humiliation with it.

> Is it not necessary to have a public fund vested in a Board of Trustees for the maintenance of all genuine public workers and their families?

I am averse to the raising of a public fund for the maintenance of the type of workers mentioned. That would indeed establish a colony of drones. Every genuine public worker should consider it an honour to belong to some branch of Congress service and to accept payment for it.

> In giving a *carte blanche* to the Swaraj Party to represent the Congress in the Provincial Councils and Assembly, have you satisfied yourself that they are amenable? Or are not the recent utterances of their leaders tantamount to saying that they will rather leave the Congress than modify their creed or programme according to any resolution of the Congress?

No *carte blanche* as conceived by the writer has been given to the Swaraj Party. I am entirely satisfied that the Party will be amenable to any well-expressed opinion of the Congress, if only because being a democratic body it must, as it has to, depend upon popular support in every respect.

> Your starting a spinning association leads me to think that since you have handed over the Congress to the Swaraj Party, you will carry on your constructive programme as a subsidiary activity instead of being a chief plank of the Congress platform. If so, are you not practically withdrawing from the Congress and throwing overboard all those who followed you when the Swaraj Party practically rebelled after the Gaya Congress?

I have not handed over nor have I any right to hand over the Congress to the Swaraj Party or to any other party. The Swaraj Party cannot retain control of the Congress for a single day if the Congressmen are not with it. I hope that the constructive programme will not become a subsidiary activity in the Congress. All that the A.I.C.C. resolution has done is to put the Council programme on a par with the constructive programme and bring into existence an independent organization of experts for the conduct of the charkha and khaddar programme. So long as the Congress extends its patronage to the All-India Spinners' Association, I cannot be said to have withdrawn from the Congress. As I have already said, I am throwing overboard nobody. Those who believe in the charkha only and not in the Councils at all can still belong to the A.I.S.A.

> If the Swaraj Party fail to carry out their promises, what is your opinion as to the future programme for the political emancipation of the country beyond the charkha and khaddar?

I do not know what promises are referred to in this question. The political emancipation of the country is possible only if and when it is prepared for armed or civil resistance. Capacity for armed resistance can only come after prolonged and tortuous preparation. Capacity for civil resistance can come only by evolving constructive ability on the part of a daily growing number of

people, and as I have no faith whatever in the capacity of India for armed resistance for generations to come, I pin my faith to the silent, sure and effective revolution of the charkha.

Young India, 15-10-1925

183. EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION

A Danish friend sends me translation of extracts from an article printed in *Gads Danske Magasin*. The heading he has given to the extracts is "European Civilization and Gandhi". In adopting his heading for *Young India* I have omitted my name as I have omitted references to my views in the extracts. My views are nothing new to the readers of *Young India*. Here is the translation received:[1]

These extracts present a very lurid picture but probably they are true in substance. That the sum total of the activities of European nations is a denial of the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount will not, I think, be gainsaid. I have reproduced the extracts merely to emphasize the necessary caution against our being lifted off our feet by the dazzle and the glitter of European arms. If the foregoing picture were the whole of Europe it would be sad for Europe as for the world. Fortunately there is a considerable body of men and women of Europe who are devoting the whole of their energy to combat the war-fever and the breathless pursuit after material wealth and enjoyment. There are reasons for hoping that this body is daily gaining in numbers and in influence. May it be the privilege of India to take part in the new awakening and to advance it, instead of retarding it by succumbing to the European excesses which the best mind of Europe condemns in unmeasured terms and is manfully struggling to bring under effective control.

Young India, 15-10-1925

[1] For the text, *vide* Appendix III.

184. A GOOD RESOLUTION

During August last, whilst I was passing through Manmad on my way back from Calcutta, some friends met me at the station. I asked as usual how many were regularly spinning in Manmad and there was no answer. Some of them thereafter thought that they would make the commencement, and a letter before me which I have kept on my file for some weeks tells me that, at the time of writing, that is 3rd September, twenty had already commenced to spin with religious regularity. I congratulate these friends on their resolution. I do hope that it will not share the fate of a similar resolution that many made last year and which but few have successfully carried out. Let the word of each one of us be as good as a written bond whose breach carries with it a swift and sharp penalty. I regard resolutions such as the one made by the Manmad friends as promises made to the nation. Those who make them are as a rule grown-up people with a full sense of their responsibility. I hope that the Manmad friends will send in their names to the All-India Spinners' Association.

Young India, 15-10-1925

185. NOTES

SEND YOUR YARN

The year of the All-India Spinners' Association begins from this month, and intending members should, therefore, begin sending their monthly subscription of yarn immediately. Those who were regular members of the Congress under the spinning franchise should find no difficulty to be members of the A.I.S.A. But even the irregular members, that is, those who could not give in the full subscription, should also be able to do so, as it has been reduced to one half of the original Congress subscription. In any case, none of these last should find any difficulty in joining the A.I.S.A. as B class members.

SUBSIDIARY INDUSTRY "PAR EXCELLENCE"

A friend sends me the following from Keatinge's *Agricultural Progress in Western India:*

> Attempts have been made to get cultivators to take up unskilled work such as cotton spinning by hand, but in view of the efficiency of spinning mills such operations can be justified economically on the assumption that the cultivator now wastes so much of his time that any work which he does, however badly paid, will be better than nothing. Unfortunately, the existing facts in many cases justify such an assumption, but to condemn the cultivators to this uphill and uneven competition is a counsel of despair. The subsidiary industry *par excellence* of the cultivators should be breeding and rearing of livestock which provides an occupation and income at all seasons, and returns to the soil the manure which is necessary to maintain it in high fertility.

This question is valuable for its two simple admissions, namely, that in many cases the cultivator in India has much time to waste and that any occupation during that time, however badly paid, is better than nothing. The writer, however, discourages hand-spinning because of the efficiency of spinning mills. Upon a close examination the argument will be found to be fallacious. The cultivator has not to compete with efficient mills at his own door. The only thing he has to compete with is his new-fangled taste for starchy and flimsy mill-made cloth. If he would only revive his old taste and return to the simple but soft and beautiful khaddar, he is never in the danger of having an idle moment thrown upon him. The efficient hotels and bakeries offer no inducement or competition to the millions of people who prefer their crudely made chupatties to the geometrically rounded and well-baked and well-spiced biscuits. The subsidiary industry of cattle-breeding that has been suggested is no doubt good and any day more paying than spinning. But it requires capital and a knowledge of breeding which the ordinary cultivator does not possess and cannot and will not possess without much previous preparation. Turn it how you will therefore, for Indian conditions there is no other subsidiary industry that can compete with hand-spinning. Its inestimable value consists not in its capacity for paying a few individuals highly but in immediately providing a remunerative occupation for millions. It is the only subsidiary occupation, therefore, that is capable of being successfully organized. Hence, not cattle-breeding, however good it is in itself, but hand-spinning is the subsidiary industry *par excellence*.

Necessity of Bodily Labour

A vigilant friend writes:

> In your address to the Jamshedpur gathering published in *Young India* of the 20th August,[1] in the first paragraph, after stressing the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Indian Association, Jamshedpur", 8-8-1925.

importance of bodily labour above intellectual, you are reported to have said: "The same thought runs throughout Hindu religion. 'He who eats without labour eats sin, is verily a thief.' This is the literal meaning of a verse in the *Bhagavad Gita*." Now, the question apart whether the *Gita* makes any such distinction between (so-called) manual and (so-called) intellectual labour, I can say that the only passage in the *Gita* which could conceivably be taken to mean what (according to the report) you have said a verse in the *Gita* literally means is the passage, Ch. III, verses 12 & 13; so that in the first place it is not a verse but two, which have been requisitioned in support of your view of "labour", and secondly there is no mention of "labour", manual or other, in either of those verses; but in the first verse there is mentioned, by way of explanation of the duty of *yajna*, man's partaking with or dedicating to the higher powers what they have bestowed upon him—failing in which "he is verily a thief",—and in the second verse we are told that "they eat sin who cook for themselves alone." So that is pretty far removed from "the literal sense of a verse" in the *Gita* as you are reported to have given it in your own paper by M.D. I hope you will make a note of it at your convenience.

Technically speaking the writer is correct in saying that the translation given by M. D. is not of one verse but a combination of parts of two verses, and I am thankful to the writer for the accuracy of his correction. But the substance of his argument seems to me to be that there is no warrant for the translation given in the report of my speech of the famous word *yajna* in the *Gita*. But I propose to stand by that translation and venture to suggest that in the verses 12 & 13 of Chapter III quoted by the writer the word is capable of only one meaning. The fourteenth verse makes it absolutely clear which means:

By food the living live; food comes of rain,
And rain comes by the pious sacrifice,
And sacrifice is paid with tithes of toil.

—ARNOLD

Here therefore there is not only the theory, in my opinion, of bodily labour propounded, but there is also the theory established of labour not only for oneself but for others, when and when only it becomes *yajna* or sacrifice. The rains come not through intellectual feats, but through sheer bodily labour. It is a well-established scientific fact that where forests are denuded of trees rains cease, where trees are planted rains are attracted and the volume of water received increases with the increase of vegetation. Laws of nature are still unexplored. We have but

scratched the surface. Who knows all the ill effects, moral and physical, of the cessation of bodily labour? Let me not be misunderstood. I do not discount the value of intellectual labour, but no amount of it is any compensation for bodily labour which every one of us is born to give for the common good of all. It may be, often is, infinitely superior to bodily labour, but it never is or can be a substitute for it, even as intellectual food, though far superior to the grains we eat, never can be a substitute for them. Indeed without the products of the earth those of the intellect would be an impossibility.

Humiliation or Honour?

A worker writes:

> I assure you that the majority of our workers feel humiliated when they get their allowances from the Congress funds, but they cannot help it. I request you to kindly encourage them through the pages of *Young India*.

How is it that young men undertake arduous labours and spend money like water in order to belong to the Indian Civil Service? They not only feel no humiliation, but they are themselves proud of the fact and are entertained by their friends when they pass the examination and receive congratulatory addresses when they get some employment in the Civil Service. Is it more honourable to be able to exercise authority over lacs of people and to collect revenue at the point of the bayonet, often from people who can ill afford it, than to belong to the Congress service where there is no authority to be wielded save that of love and service and where the only remuneration possible is a bare livelihood? If it be urged that in the Congress service there is an unwholesome juxtaposition of honorary workers and paid workers, there is the same juxtaposition in the Government service. The Government has, and every government must have, against one paid servant tens of honorary servants. There is very often even jealousy between the two classes. The only reason, therefore, for the disinclination for Congress service so far as I have been able to gather is its newness and instability. All the other reasons are more or less imaginary. Indeed, when the Congress acquires real prestige, which it has not at present—its popularity is merely comparative and not absolute—even a peon will consider it to be an honour to belong to this national service and to take less than the market wage. Meanwhile, I would urge all honest paid workers in the Congress organization, whether at the centre or in the educational, khaddar or the Swarajist bran-

ches, to make the service and the institution popular and attractive by strictest integrity, devotion, and ceaseless application. Those who are conscious that they are giving all the time and attention that they bargained for to the paid national service need feel no compunction about belonging to it. The more progress we make in the work of construction, the more paid workers we shall need. We are too poor as a nation to afford a large number of whole-time honorary workers. We will have to fall back more and more upon paid workers. The sooner, therefore, the idea of humiliation about accepting payment, when it is a necessity, is given up the better it will be for the nation.

Young India, 15-10-1925

186. SPEECH AT DISTRICT CONFERENCE, BALLIA[1]

October 16, 1925

After making an appeal for silence and thanking the associations that had presented him addresses, Mr. Gandhi said that, in 1921, he had a mind to visit Ballia, but he was sorry he could not. He then had asked Mr. Motilal Nehru to go instead and give peace unto them. Four years after, he was happy to be amidst them. He would have stayed longer with them but for exigency of time. There was one thing that pained him and which he did not like to conceal. He believed in the power of the people of Ballia. But he also believed that that power could be kept under control by the managing capacity of the workers. Now that he was weak and infirm, unable to withstand the din and bustle of crowds, he had hoped he would be spared the trouble incidental to such gatherings.

Continuing, he observed that the constructive work done by the workers of Ballia pleased him, on which he congratulated them. He was also glad to learn that the two communities lived amicably in Ballia. He prayed that their vow of friendship might be successful and they might set an example to others in this direction. Dwelling on the poverty of India, he confidently remarked that there was no more potent remedy for it than the charkha. Many women were compelled to break stones for their livelihood and he knew how some of the overseers treated them. He spoke from personal experience. He exhorted the audience to help Indian women to be as pure as Sita by abandoning foreign cloth and plying the charkha. "Wear khaddar and increase the power of the charkha." He warned the people against intoxicants,

[1] Among those that attended the conference were Rajendra Prasad, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Syed Mahmud. Various local bodies presented addresses.

gambling and prostitution. The Yadavakula[1] was exterminated from India because they abandoned dharma and indulged in gambling. They had reminded him that theirs was part of the land of Valmiki, the Ganges and the Sarju and they were determined to serve India. Surely they did what could possibly be done in 1921. But they should do penance for the mistakes they committed in those days.

In the end he appealed for contributions to the Deshbandhu fund which is to be devoted to the popularization of the charkha. He laid stress on the necessity for real, solid work for the regeneration of India.

The Leader, 21-10-1925

187. SPEECH AT KASHI VIDYAPITH, BANARAS

October 17, 1925

BABU BHAGWANDAS, TEACHERS, STUDENTS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It is true that this Vidyapith was started by me. But that it still exists is due, first, to the generosity and love, or attachment if you like, of Shri Shivprasad and, secondly, to the love of Shri Bhagwandas. It cannot be called attachment in his case for he uses discretion in doing what he considers his duty. It is owing to the enthusiasm, the intellectual effort and the money of these two that the Vidyapith is there even today.

I have been asked if I still believe in these Vidyapiths. Was I right or in error when, in 1921, I asked the students to leave Government schools and colleges? I have often asked myself. As you know I am not ashamed to admit my mistakes and am always ready to repent. I confess my errors publicly. I ask my inmost self whether I am right or wrong and it is my experience that the voice that comes from there expresses the truth. I have not known it to prove false. Now, after all this bitter experience the voice still says that I was on the right path. What was done in 1921 was just the thing to do. It was good to set up Vidyapiths. It is essential to have Vidyapiths for our boys and girls. Of all the Vidyapiths that were established in the country those in Banaras, Patna, Poona and Gujarat are still functioning. I do not say that they are functioning very satisfactorily, but I do wish that they should exist and make progress. I do not mean by progress that they should each have a thousand scholars in them. A Vidyalaya teacher complained to me at Madhupur that boys were

[1] The clan to which Shri Krishna belonged

not too eager to join. I told him not to despair and to look into his own heart. If he stood firmly on the principles which had moved him to join the Vidyalaya, he was bound to keep the Vidyalaya going even if there was only one scholar left in it. He felt grieved because he cared more for numbers. Our tradition lays down that even if there should be only one scholar and one teacher in a school, but both with faith in each other and the teacher believing in the goodness of gifting learning and the scholar believing that it is for his emancipation and for shaping his life here and in the world beyond, then the school should go on. This applies to this Vidyapith. I want to tell Shri Bhagwandas and Shri Shivprasad also not to worry about numbers. The restriction concerning the Congress is no longer there. If you feel that the Vidyapith should be kept going you should dedicate your lives for it. There is a Sanskrit verse saying that one should dedicate oneself to the task that one undertakes. But this expresses a half-truth. For does it mean that if one takes to drink one should keep drinking all one's life? The Shastras ask us to be firm in our faith. If you stand firm on your principles and wish to continue your experiment you should not mind even if public opinion is against it. If the Vidyapith turns out fine students who would dedicate themselves wholly to the cause of the country, or even one such, we should consider that the Vidyapith has been a success, for the aim of the Vidyapith is to teach boys to dedicate their lives for the country. So long as our aim is clear before us we should not worry whether we have five students or one. In the thirty-five years of my public life it has been my experience, not once but several times, that if we are firm in our faith and go on working accordingly, the numbers also increase. The good of India, therefore, lies in our firmly holding on to principles in our work.

I appeal to the students not to think about numbers or worry about their livelihood. No assurance can be given them with regard to livelihood, but if they do bodily labour they will manage to get enough to eat though not enough to deck themselves in finery or live in luxury. But if there are students here who think that they have to go out and take up employment, like others, to earn more money, it is better that they leave the Vidyapith. Only those who have thoroughly understood the aims of this institution should remain here.

I am not ashamed that I have given the first position to the charkha. If the whole of India gives up plying the charkha I shall be able to devote 10 hours to the charkha, for then there will be no need for me to indulge in fruitless speech-making before

the people. There is nothing for me like the charkha . . .[1] Life is changing where there are charkhas plying. I saw it during my tour of Bihar. Ply the charkha for only half an hour or fifteen minutes and think of India when you do it. You should do it, Hindus and Muslims, with the name of God on your lips and you will see what power it generates. How many there are who see God in a stone idol. But it is the feeling that matters. It is feeling that made Shri Ramdas Gaur take me to his place and show me the image of Shri Rama.

I know the economics of villagers. That is why I have become a *Bhangi* or a chamar. I know their suffering. I am charkha-mad. I am madder even than Laila or Majnu. Even if a student does not have faith in the charkha he can come to the Vidyapith for his education. Please run the Vidyapith for the sake of your principles. May God make this institution prosper.

At the end of the speech Shri Bhagwandas, on behalf of the students, asked Gandhiji: "It is your wish that the country should advance through the charkha, is it not? You wish to make it the god that we should worship?"

GANDHIJI: That is right.

SHRI BHAGWANDAS: . . . I accept the importance of the charkha but I do not share the view that we can worship Lakshmi, Saraswati and other deities only through the charkha. We have to bring about political and social changes. This can be done only if we accept the doctrine of *varna* by karma.

GANDHIJI: I believe in the view of *varna* not only by karma but also by birth. I give the charkha the pride of place but I do not consider it the be-all and end-all. The charkha has the first place because there is no other method of doing away with the poverty of hundreds of millions of our countrymen. Lakshmi acquires through this not only individual power but social power. For Saraswati we have the Vidyapith. Our old civilization has become soiled. It will become cleansed by our removing untouchability. Out of the 24 hours we must spin on the charkha for half an hour. As to what the genius of this Vidyapith can be I am not fit to say. Only Shri Bhagwandas can tell us that.

[From Hindi]
Aaj, 19-10-1925

[1] Here some words are missing in the source.

188. SPEECH AT MUNICIPAL MEETING, LUCKNOW[1]

[*October 17, 1925*][2]

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I thank you for the address you have presented. It is couched in the best Lucknowi diction. I spent a good deal of time reading Urdu while I was in Yeravda Jail. Even so I find the Urdu of your address a little difficult to understand. I must ask you to keep this kind of language to yourselves. Let me have Urdu which even those not belonging to U.P. can understand. It should be Hindustani. I call that language Hindustani which contains such Sanskrit and Persian words as a peasant like me can understand.

In replying to the Calcutta Corporation's address, I said one or two things, which I shall repeat here. In Bihar the municipalities which gave me addresses also confessed their shortcomings in their addresses. In your address you have not mentioned any shortcomings. When I was motoring here with Motilalji, the latter remarked: "What kind of roads they have here!" I shall therefore say to you: Please make your roads as good as your language so that they will be a comfort to those who travel on *ekkas* and those who, like me, go in motor-cars. In their addresses several municipalities complained of paucity of funds. If your municipality also has insufficient funds, I would ask your Chairman to take a pickaxe in hand and with the help of Congress volunteers put the roads right so that *ekkas* can ply comfortably on them.

A dairy farm has been mentioned in the address. I do not know whether these dairies can supply good milk to the people of the town. You can assure enough milk to people only when you have sufficient cows and buffaloes.

It is good that those who oppose you politically do not oppose your administration. You have certainly done better work than the preceding Board and I congratulate you upon it. New elections to the Board are about to be held. I advise voters to elect only those candidates who will undertake to improve the

[1] Held on Municipal grounds at 5 p.m. Gandhiji, who was accompanied by Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Syed Mahmud, was replying to an address of welcome presented to him by the Municipality.

[2] From reports in *The Hindustan Times*, 20-10-1925 and *The Pioneer*, 19-10-1925

roads of Lucknow, will arrange for good milk being made available and will speak a language that all can understand. If the Lucknow Board can show the work I have suggested, I shall recommend to the Congress President, Sarojini Devi, to have a resolution passed by the Congress congratulating you.

Nothing has been said in the address on the subject of Hindu-Muslim unity. It is sad. It is shameful that there is so much bad blood between the Hindus and Mussalmans here. The atmosphere in the whole country has been poisoned. I say if the two communities must fight, let them do so but what will be the upshot? They have both got to live here together. Neither Hindus nor Mussalmans can leave India. They have to live here and therefore they must unite. And if they cannot unite here in Lucknow, where else can they unite? If the two communities live together in amity, what can prevent us from having what we want? The whole world is laughing at us. Dr. Ansari says people in foreign countries are asking if cow-killing and music are things over which Hindus and Mussalmans must continue to fight and smash each other's heads.

I do not need addresses. I am tired of praise. But I wish you to take up the responsibility for being able to say, when I come here next, that there has been no rioting here during the interval and unity has prevailed between Hindus and Mussalmans. May God grant good sense to the people of Lucknow. I thank you again for your address.

[From Hindi]
Aaj, 24-10-1925

189. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, LUCKNOW[1]

October 17, 1925

. . . Mahatmaji began by saying that he was taken unawares. He never knew he would have to address a public meeting at Lucknow. He regretted that Lucknow of which he held a very good opinion should have turned into a battle-ground of communal animosities. When he was keeping twenty-one days' fast at Delhi, he had received a letter from the Hindu and Muslim leaders of Lucknow asking him to intervene in the matter. He had agreed to it, but no one had turned up. He thought they had better compose their differences among themselves without his aid. They thought that the sword was the only solution. Let them try it rather than seek the assistance

[1] Held at Aminuddaula Park, with Harkaran Nath Mishra in the chair

of a helpless and non-violent man like himself. He then said that on his return from Europe Dr. Ansari ran up to him to give an account of his experiences in Europe. The Doctor had occasion to meet all sorts of people in Europe, particularly Turks, and all of them were unanimously of the opinion that it was sheer madness on the part of Hindus and Muslims to spend their energies in quarrelling on trifles and thus sacrifice their greater ends. He consequently exhorted the audience to compose their differences and achieve unity as soon as possible. But that unity must be a real unity and not a fake.

Mahatmaji said his appeal for khaddar might fall flat if made to the fashionable citizens of Lucknow. But on behalf of the poor people of India, he would make that appeal in spite of his fear. He exhorted the audience to wear khaddar and explained some of its advantages. He said:

Khaddar means five annas out of every seven annas to the poor. Mill cloth means one pice in every five annas to the poor. But foreign cloth does not help even the poor of England. Almost all of it goes to the capitalist.

He then said, that the use of the charkha must be made by Indians of higher social status to inspire the poor with honesty of conviction and purpose.

He then deprecated the existence of the institution of untouchability which, he said, was no part of Hindu religion. It was irreligious and ungodly. India should purge itself of the ugly blot.

The Hindustan Times, 20-10-1925

190. SPEECH AT SITAPUR

October 17, 1925

The Municipal Board of Sitapur presented an address to Mahatma Gandhi at Lalbag. The address was read by Babu Sambhu Nath, Chairman of the Municipality, in which Mahatmaji was requested to help them with some suggestions from his wide experience of municipal affairs both at home and abroad which would guide the Municipal Commissioners of Sitapur as an ideal in their efforts for improving the city. He said that only one rupee had been sanctioned for expenditure in connection with the address.

Mahatma Gandhi in reply said that he would not have voted even one pice for the purpose if he had been a member of the Sitapur Municipal Board. He said that he was not against Congressmen entering the Municipal Boards and District Boards with the object of serving their fellow-countrymen. But no one should try to be a member in these local bodies for the sake of self-aggrandizement, and with selfish motives. It was futile to enter a Municipal Board without a genuine spirit of service and self-sacrifice. He knew no other ideal for a Municipal Board than that of keeping the city clean and free

from disease, helping the poor and keeping their quarters free from filth and squalor, and making slums an impossibility.

Financial stringency should not be advanced as an excuse. The Municipal Commissioners must be prepared to work with their own hands if money was wanting. Thus they would set an example that would be followed by each and every citizen, and was sure to remove all obstacles in the path of progress in municipal affairs.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-10-1925

191. SPEECH AT SITAPUR

October 17, 1925

. . . Mahatma Gandhi said that he was not entitled to the addresses presented on behalf of the two Sabhas[1], for he had been a critic of both, and excepting such comment and criticism he had done nothing for them. But he had said nothing that he did not believe to be true, and his criticism was that of a friend and well-wisher, offered in a spirit of sympathy and with a desire to help them. To render real service to the Hindu Sabha, one must be a true Hindu. The Hindu dharma was the *sanatan* dharma. He believed the Vedas and the Hindu religion to be eternal, and Truth was also eternal. Hence he saw no difference between Hinduism and truth. Whatever was untrue could not belong to the Hindu religion. He could never persuade himself to forsake truth, and he would tell the truth in the teeth of all opposition and even if thousands of swords were drawn against him. There was little difference between truth and ahimsa. As a Hindu he could not cherish feelings of enmity in his heart against anybody. Even if he had an enemy, he could win him through love. The Hindus could advance and serve the cause of their religion best on the path of ahimsa. Let the Hindus work for the regeneration of their religion, but in their hearts there must be no ill will against their Mussalman brethren.

Some thought that he was preaching cowardice in the name of ahimsa. That was entirely false. He hated nothing more than cowardice. The Hindus of Bettiah had also misunderstood him. He would like to see them die fighting for the honour of their mothers and daughters, but flying in fear on such occasions was sheer cowardice, and nothing could be more disgraceful. Ahimsa and not cowardice was preferable to violence. True ahimsa required real bravery. The most essentia thing for Hindu *sangathan*[2] was the formation of character. Without this and unless every Hindu stood on truth and character, real *sangathan* was impossible and Hinduism would be nowhere.

[1] The Hindu Sabha and the Vaidya Sabha

[2] Bringing together

Replying to the address of the Vaidya Sabha, he said that he had been mercilessly criticized in the Press and on platforms and even abused in many quarters for what he had said about the *vaidyas*. But he stuck to his guns. He neither retraced nor withdrew anything. He was afraid he had been misunderstood. His comments and criticism were in the main meant for the *vaidyas* of the present time, and not for the Ayurvedic system which they served. He was not against the great system itself, but he did not like their attitude of self-satisfaction and the methods they were following.

He had criticized them for their failure to understand and do justice to Ayurveda. He had tried his level best to promote the cause of Ayurveda, and help the *vaidyas* in all possible ways. But their performance had been disappointing. The *vaidyas* must go ahead. It was wrong to think that they had nothing to learn from the West. Although he had condemned the West for its neglect of the soul, he was not blind to its achievements in many fields of action. The *vaidyas* must be prepared to supplement their knowledge by taking lessons from the West. They must not sleep with the idea that the system they upheld was the last word on the subject. They must be up and doing and their motto must be "Progress".

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 24-10-1925

192. ABOUT UNTOUCHABILITY

A friend has asked some questions about untouchability which I believe I ought to answer as best as I may and which, therefore, I give below:[1]

In my opinion, untouchability in the form in which we practise it today is not, and ought not to be, an essential part of Hinduism. There is sheer ignorance and cruelty behind it. I look upon it as an excrescence on Hinduism. It does not protect religion, but suffocates it. Its practice on certain occasions, as during the days following the death of a near relation, is in a different class. One may follow it to the extent one wants to. It is not followed with equal rigidity by all communities. The practice of untouchability in this form should be treated as a matter of hygiene. To a greater or less extent, some such regulations are found all over the world. But treating *Antyajas* as

[1] The questions are not translated here. The correspondent had compared restrictions about marrying and eating and the practice of untouchability to three concentric walls erected to protect Hindu society and asked (1) whether the last was not a fundamental principle for the Hindus like the other two and (2) whether the pulling down of the outer wall would not weaken the inner two walls.

untouchables is a cruel form of boycott. Whatever justification there may have been for the practice when it started, there is none now. Like tuberculosis, therefore, it is eating into the vitals of Hinduism.

Just as the many dilapidated and useless parts of a building, if not pulled down, weaken the rest of the building, so the outer wall of untouchability weakens, instead of protecting, the inner wall of restrictions in regard to eating in company and marrying outside one's circle. It is true that, in the same way as we look upon untouchability as an evil, there are some who regard these restrictions also as an evil and attack them as such. There is, however, some reasonable principle behind them. It would ordinarily be improper for a conscientious vegetarian to eat at a non-vegetarian's place. But I see no dharma in treating as untouchables those who do not follow the rules that we do. No one practises such a dharma. Anyone who wants to practise it would have to treat everyone else in the world as an untouchable.[1]

The movement for the eradication of untouchability has no connection with the problem of caste. However, according to the rule that one important reform leads to another, reformers have turned their eyes to the problem of caste-division too. I desire the disappearance of sub-castes, and in fact they are disappearing. I do not, however, see the same evil in them as I see in the practice of untouchability. These sub-divisions are a source of inconvenience. They obstruct social intercourse in some ways. But their abolition is a reform which can wait. The eradication of untouchability cannot wait and it is, therefore, very necessary to keep the two apart and understand the distinction between them.

I see no harm in accepting clean water from a pot filled in a clean manner by a clean *Antyaja*. Ordinarily, members of other communities accept water served by *Kanabis*[2] or *Ghatis*[3]; that rule should also apply to *Antyajas*. That is, in dealing with them the same rule should be followed which the so-called upper castes generally follow in their intercourse with the other castes. In the South, where every non-Brahmin is an untouchable in the eyes of a Brahmin, the practice is an excrescence even on an excrescence.

[1] The third question was where the movement for the eradication of untouchability would stop, since most of those who advocated it also wanted reformation of the caste system and even Gandhiji saw no harm in accepting water from an *Antyaja*.

[2] A peasant community in Gujarat

[3] Name applied to certain classes in Maharashtra

I have come across no one who would defend it, and the practice is gradually disappearing.[1]

It is not true that *Antyaja* children must necessarily be dirty. I have seen many *Antyaja* children who were cleaner than other children. The only rule can be this: a child which does not pass a certain test of cleanliness ought not to be admitted to the school, or, all children who are dirty should be put in a separate division meant for them and should be given special instruction in cleanliness. To assume that *Antyaja* children must necessarily be dirty and refuse admission to a child even if he is clean, is to treat *Antyajas* in the same way in which Indians are treated in the Colonies. There, the very fact of having been born an Indian is a crime. Generally speaking, the practical thing to do in the present circumstances is to start a large number of schools specially for *Antyaja* children. However much we try, all *Antyaja* children will not be brought for enrolment in the general primary schools. Admission to general schools, therefore, should be open to such of them as observe the rules of cleanliness, but there should also be separate primary schools for them for their special encouragement.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 18-10-1925

193. ABOUT MARWARIS

The national awakening in 1921 did not show its effect in regard to one issue only. It was so comprehensive that its effect was felt by all communities and in connection with all problems. If anyone is hasty enough to believe that that movement was a short-lived affair he is welcome to do so, but as time passes everyone will see that there was no truth in such a belief. The form of the movement may seem to have changed, but its substance will be seen to have remained unaltered. These thoughts occur to me as I reflect on my speech to the Marwari Conference[2] in Bhagalpur. A many-sided movement for reform is going on among Marwaris. This particular conference was of

[1] The fourth question was whether, it was not risky to admit *Antyaja* children to schools attended by other children so long as the former had not learnt to observe the ordinary rules of personal cleanliness.

[2] Bihar Provincial Marwari Conference, which was held from October 1 to October 4, 1925

Agarwal Marwaris. As we see heads of communities in some places in Gujarat employing the weapon of boycott in connection with the movement on the issue of *Antyajas*, so also among Marwaris, we see the heads using that weapon in other circumstances too.

The issues of widow-remarriage, child-marriage, etc., affect all sections of Hindu society in some degree. And, therefore, though I have already reproduced in *Young India* a part of what I told the Marwari friends, I wish to elaborate on the subject a little here. Boycott is a dangerous weapon and, if not used carefully, it can easily degenerate into a species of violence. If this happens, the community using it will perish. I, therefore, advised the Marwari friends never to use the weapon of boycott. So long as the heads of communities are not wise and selfless men, filled with the spirit of love, they should never think of using the weapon of boycott. Anyone who wishes to introduce a reform should be allowed to do so. In what way does he harm the community? One can understand action being taken to prevent or discourage what the whole world believes to be immoral. But is there any ground for expelling from the community a person who mixes with *Antyajas*, another who has decided to get his daughter married only after she has attained puberty, a third who comes forward to marry a girl who became a widow while she was still a child and a fourth who is ready to accept a partner for his son from another sub-division of his own community, all because they think that it is dharma to act as they do? Boycotting such persons will have the effect of preventing reform of any kind and rule out the possibility of progress of one's religion and community and of the country. I have no doubt in my mind that the weapon of boycott ought not to be misused in this manner. As I keep touring in other provinces, the tales which I hear of the sufferings of widows, of the immorality which prevails because of child-widows and of the marriages of children of very tender age make me shudder. Is it any wonder that the progeny of such social life as the Hindus' should lack virility? If the heads of communities understand where their duty lies and what would become them best, they would encourage reformers who tried to rid society of such evils.

I discussed at the conference the problem of cow-protection and of social reform. As I see more of *goshalas*, I realize that the people do not get all the benefit they can from them. How very painful it is that hides of dead animals, worth nine crores of rupees, are exported every year to countries like Germany while we use foot-wear made from the hides of slaughtered animals

and still believe that we are preserving our dharma! Marwaris run the largest number of *goshalas* in the country. They seem to be contributing most to the cause of cow-protection. But the money they give is not used wisely, with the result that the number of cows and bullocks slaughtered is increasing, instead of decreasing. Their quality is degenerating, milk is becoming costlier and its adulteration is becoming more widespread. What a chaotic state of affairs! Marwari friends do not mismanage their business in this manner. Why do they, after contributing money for *goshalas*, take no further interest in them? Does not a philanthropic cause call for efficiency and practical ability? It is in the power of Marwaris to stop the use of the hides of slaughtered cattle. It is their dharma to take in their hand, with a purely philanthropic motive, the trade in the hides of dead cattle. At present, we refuse, in the name of religion and through sheer superstition, to utilize the hides of cattle which die in *goshalas*. We thereby encourage the slaughter of other cattle, for it would be a different matter if we refused to use the hides of cattle altogether, dead or slaughtered. But no Hindu looks at the matter in this way; on the contrary, Hinduism permits free use of hides, in the same way that, though we venerate the cow, we regard her milk as holy and encourage its consumption. I can look at this matter objectively, since I never consume cow's or buffalo's milk and use leather as little as possible. I have, from experience, come to the conclusion that, if we wish to protect the cow and the buffalo, we shall have to use their milk and hides and the manure which they yield to the fullest extent. If a time comes when we will not use even milk, we should welcome it; but, when it comes, we shall no longer be running *goshalas* and Nature will protect cows and buffaloes according to her own laws as she now does other animals which we have not domesticated. Till that time comes, the principle behind cow-protection seems to me to be the protection of all useful cattle which have been or may be domesticated; and their protection, too, means refusing to kill them for food or pleasure and looking after their physical well-being, as long as the animals are alive, with as much care as we exercise in looking after our own bodies. If with that end in view we do not use their hide after they are dead, the number of cattle slaughtered is bound to increase from day to day. This is why I wish to plead with Marwari friends who want to serve the cause of cow-protection that they use their intelligence and their business acumen in one year, and, in the course of time, will succeed in stopping their slaughter altogether without having

to entreat anyone for the purpose. Those who see no wrong in eating beef will not desist from eating it just out of respect for the Hindu sentiment, so long as it is cheap. Giving up something even though it costs little requires a sensibility of a very high order. Such sensibility is a religious feeling, and it can be awakened neither through force nor through entreaties. I wish, therefore, to make the same suggestion to other Hindus which I have made to Marwari friends. They should not only overcome their aversion to taking advantage of tanneries, but should also realize that, within limits, it is one of the essential functions of *goshalas* to run them.

Just as Marwari friends have made the cause of cow-protection their own, so also have they made the propagation of Hindi a special object of their charities. This cause, too, requires exercise of intelligence as much as it requires money. I realize that this subject will not be of as much interest to Gujarati readers [of *Navajivan*] as it is to Marwari friends. Nevertheless, I discuss it here in the hope that Gujaratis, too, may come to take the fullest interest in this cause. Propagation of Hindi can be discussed under three heads:

First, the development of Hindi in areas where it is the mother tongue. This is the work of Hindi-speaking writers, and, since they have today no Rabindranath among them, apart from expressing my discontent I wish to say no more.

Second, propagating Hindi in non-Hindi areas. My belief is that this work is going on systematically in the South. Practically nothing, however, is being done in a large field such as Bengal offers. Able teachers of Hindi should be engaged there, free classes for teaching Hindi should be started and, as has been done in the South, simple books easy to read should be brought out which would help people to learn Hindi through Bengali.

Third, spreading the use of the Devanagari script. If everyone learnt this script in addition to his own, Hindi would come to be understood with the greatest ease in all parts, and people in the different provinces speaking languages descended from Sanskrit would understand one another's language with equal ease. The best way of thus propagating Hindi in Bengal, for example, is to bring out editions of the best books in that language in Devanagari script, with a glossary in each book giving the meaning of Bengali words in Hindi. If the rich classes among Marwaris, Gujaratis and others and men of letters take up this work, in a very short time excellent progress can be made.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-10-1925

194. SPEECH AT U.P. HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN, SITAPUR[1]

October 18, 1925

Replying to an address of welcome, Mr. Gandhi supported the claim of Hindi to be the national language of India. He was glad that work was being done in Madras to popularize Hindi, but nothing was being done in Bengal and elsewhere. Referring to the language of the welcome address, Mr. Gandhi said it contained too many Sanskrit words just as the address presented by the Lucknow Municipal Board on the previous day contained too many Persian words. It was difficult for him to follow such language. For a language to be the national language it was necessary that it was easily intelligible to the ordinary people.

The Leader, 21-10-1925

195. SPEECH AT U.P. POLITICAL CONFERENCE, SITAPUR[2]

October 18, 1925

Mr. Gandhi, who had so far been busy in spinning, was . . . requested to address the Conference. He said he would not say anything on the Hindu-Muslim question, for he had no influence on either community, at least on the section that was fighting. He would speak at length on the subject of the charkha which the president had only touched upon, and untouchability which the Maulana had not touched upon, being a non-Hindu. Charkha and khaddar were his creed and he could not refrain from dwelling on it. He thought no man would die of starvation in India if everyone took to the charkha. He had travelled in rural areas and seen the poor condition of the peasantry. For four months at least in a year peasants were idle, and if they took to spinning in their leisure time, the earnings would make substantial increase in their poor incomes.

No machine could utilize the labour of those agriculturists in the country. He pointed out that wherever the people were plying the charkha their incomes had increased. In Bengal he found that the income of every worker's family

[1] Held at Rajah School under the presidentship of Ramjilal Sharma

[2] The Conference was held at Lalbagh under the presidentship of Shaukat Ali. Mahomed Ali, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Syed Mahmud were among those present.

had increased by Rs. 2 per month and according to Lord Curzon it was Rs. 30 per head per year. Charkha can give you Rs. 24 per head per year as additional income. Out of Rs. 7 as price of cloth Rs. 2 will go to agriculturists and Rs. 5 or 4 to the spinner and weaver.

He had just been at Atrai and seen the difference that spinning, as a supplementary occupation, had made in the condition of thousands of families. But if villagers were to be given this supplementary occupation, people must take to wearing khaddar. He further said that swaraj was not possible without the support of masses, which could not be had without village organization and the charkha was the only means of organizing villages. If those who thought he had gone mad could point out anything that could achieve the same object in an equally good or better manner, he would have no hesitation in giving up the charkha. But no such alternative had been pointed out.

He had founded the Spinning Association with a view to organize the people. It was non-political. Even Lord Reading and Indian soldiers could join the Association.

During the course of his speech Mahatmaji said the Conference would be soon called upon to lend its support to the resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. at Patna. This resolution makes one fundamental change in the franchise with a view to give more facility to the people to become members of the Congress. It converted the Congress into an essentially political organization which would carry on its work through the Swaraj Party whose policy would be controlled by the Congress. The Swaraj Party would draw its own programme and rules in all local and central legislatures. The Swaraj Party has its own programmes and rules. These programmes and rules the Congress had adopted. The Congress would give every support to the Swaraj Party's political work. The Congress pledged itself at Belgaum, Delhi and Patna to give full scope and support to the Swaraj Party to carry on the political work on behalf of the Congress. The Swarajists had carried khaddar into legislatures even and on the presidential chair of the Assembly. Swarajists can do much in the interest of temperance and the peoples' poverty through the legislatures.

If any other party would go a step further, or even so far in working their constructive programme inside the legislatures and local boards, he would not have hesitated in extending his support to them. He concluded by appealing to the Hindus to remove the canker of untouchability from the body of Hinduism.[1]

The Leader 21-10-1925 and *The Hindustan Times* 21-10-1925

[1] At the end, a resolution of condolence on the death of C. R. Das and Sir Surendranath Banerjea was moved from the Chair and adopted. A second resolution welcoming the Patna Congress decisions and moved by Motilal Nehru was also adopted.

196. SPEECH AT ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY CONFERENCE, SITAPUR[1]

October 18, 1925

Mr. Gandhi endorsed the remark of the late Mr. Gokhale that by treating some of their countrymen as untouchables Indians had become untouchables themselves in the whole world outside India. He also endorsed Swami Shraddhanand's suggestion that as a practical measure to remove untouchability each high-caste Hindu family should keep a person belonging to some so-called untouchable class. Mr. Gandhi was sure there was no place in Hinduism for untouchability. It was a sin to treat any human being as untouchable and, therefore, the so-called high-caste Hindus should purify not the untouchables but themselves. He also appealed to the untouchables to be clean physically as well as morally and to adopt the charkha and patronize khaddar.

The Leader, 21-10-1925

197. MESSAGE TO CONGRESS WORKERS OF KANPUR

October 19, 1925

I am confident that all the workers there, women as well as men, will help in every way to make the session of the Congress a success.[2]

From the Hindi original: C.W. 9270. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

198. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *October 21, 1925*][3]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I have your letter. I am saving an anna by enclosing this with the letter to Chhaganlal. Durga should try to write with the left hand.

[1] Presided over by the Raja Saheb of Maheva, this was held in the evening.

[2] This message was sent in connection with the Congress session to be held in December 1925 at Kanpur where there was a split among the workers.

[3] Reference in the letter to the Kutch tour suggests that it was written before Gandhiji left Bombay for Kutch on October 21, 1925.

I too believe what you say about Harilal[1]. The Pathan's bogey is always there, but he will not come. Mona wrote in her letter that Bhombal has paid up all the debts of Harilal.

About Dahyabhai, I can decide nothing here. Let Dahyabhai go with me to Kutch. If you are prepared to come, bring him along. Vallabhbhai too will come.

You are right. Whenever you have been ill, you have been away from me. The inference is terrible. You can't stay without me? What about Durga then? Polak at times was in the same condition and I used to tell him that he had wedded two wives and that, too, when the English law allowed him to have only one.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I send you today some more material for *Y.I.*

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: S.N. 11435

199. SPEECH AT BOMBAY[2]

October 21, 1925

Mahatmaji . . . thanked the Cutchi residents of Bombay and the people of Cutch for extending him an invitation to visit their province. He did not know why he was going to Cutch, except that, perhaps, it was the love of the Cutchi people that was dragging him there. They all knew the things that were dear to his heart and he did not propose to say anything anew about them. He was nearing death, but all the same his ideals and ambitions remained unlimited. In fact, the nearer he approached his end, the higher and wider grew his ambition. He only requested them that they should all shower their blessings on him and pray God to give him strength and courage to stick to his ideals and work. He would in passing remind them that in everything he did he was prompted by his love for truth and dharma. He assured them that he would do nothing in Cutch that would make them repent for the hospitality that they were extending him.

Continuing, Mahatmaji said that he was in urgent need of rest and he looked forward to getting that in Cutch. He was too much over-burdened with anxiety. He had received many letters stating the grievances and the urgent

[1] Gandhiji's eldest son

[2] Gandhiji was leaving for Kutch by steamer. He addressed a large number of people who had gathered at Ferry Wharf, Carnaç Bunder, to see him off.

needs of the Cutchi people. He did not want to say anything about them beyond saying that, if he were unsuccessful in mitigating them, they should not take it as a sign of apathy, but as a sign of his weakness.

Mahatmaji was then taken to the s.s. *Rupavati* of the Bombay Steam Navigation Company which was specially chartered for the trip by Sheth Kanji Jadhavji and conveyed to his cabin. Mahatmaji's party includes Messrs Mahadev Desai, Vallabhbhai Patel, Manilal Kothari and Jivraj Nensey.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-10-1925

200. BOYCOTTS v. *CONSTRUCTION*

An Andhra friend, in his urgent invitation asking me to be present at the forthcoming Ganjam District Conference, writes as follows:

> The best part of our Congress work in connection with the constructive programme was done in places round Hiramandalam. Majority of the people wear khaddar. You are probably aware that Andhra Desha is not in love with Council work. It belongs to the No-change party. It never excuses you for dropping the boycotts. Our hope lies in constructive work. People are getting disheartened. Their enthusiasm is at a low ebb. Hiramandalam is a great khaddar producing centre. The Fiska Congress Committee manufactures several varieties of khaddar and has one of the best shops in the district. It has also a national school. It is a Vaisya (Bania) centre. They are almost all khaddarwalahs. But what good? Their enthusiasm for swaraj is well-nigh extinguished. Without the boycotts people have no faith in constructive work. Our efforts to rekindle enthusiasm are unavailing. I have surrendered all my worldly prospects, been rendered utterly destitute and am still at the work, hoping against hope to achieve swaraj.

I have informed him that it is impossible for me to be present at the Ganjam District Conference however much I should like to be able to do so. I am, with great difficulty, and for me, in slow stages, finishing the remaining and indispensable part of the tour programme for the year, after which I hope to have rest from incessant travelling. I am, therefore, sorry to have to disappoint the Andhra friends. But I have reproduced the foregoing extract not for the purpose of advertising the necessity for rest for my tired limbs, but in order to remove the confusion of thought that has enabled the writer to attribute want of interest in constructive work to the suspension of boycotts by the Congress. In the first place, if Andhra Desh has no love for Council work

the Congress does not compel it to manufacture love for Councils. It merely authorizes those who believe in Council work to take it up on behalf of and in the name of the Congress. It withdraws the prohibition from those who gave up such work not out of faith but merely out of loyalty to the Congress. It prohibits people from using the name of the Congress to condemn entry into the legislative bodies and, lastly, it encourages those who believe in such political work to prosecute it with zeal. But it does not in any way fetter a single Congressman's conscience. Those must have a poor faith in themselves whose zeal is damped for want of extraneous support. Moreover, the writer forgets that the Congress has not only not dropped boycott of foreign cloth, but it will bless and issue a certificate of merit to those who will achieve that boycott. I am striving my best to deserve that certificate and I invite everybody to join me in the endeavour. That boycott can be achieved only when khaddar becomes popular enough to be universal. Hence the inauguration of the All-India Spinners' Association. Every boycott has its constructive side. The Association will devote its best energy to the constructive effort. What have the other boycotts—for instance that of titles or schools or law-courts—to do with the manufacture and wearing of khaddar? The beauty of these boycotts lies in their individuality and capacity to stand alone. The individual taking part in any or all of them always benefits, and when a sufficiently large number take part in them the nation becomes fit for swaraj. Blind enthusiasm and blind faith can lead to no lasting good. It is, therefore, necessary to realize that the constructive programme by itself has an inestimable value even apart from its undoubted capacity to fit us for swaraj.

The writer has done well in surrendering all his worldly prospects and in rendering himself utterly destitute. But let him consider that sacrifice to be its own reward. Thousands upon thousands will have to do likewise before swaraj is attained by the nation. He who has sacrificed his all for swaraj has certainly attained it for himself. There is no need, therefore, for such a one to 'hope against hope', for if his sacrifice is voluntary and intelligent it is all hope without any disappointment. One's faith has got to be bright and intelligent before it can enkindle faith in others. Those, therefore, who believe in khaddar and other parts of the programme of 1921 must be able to stand unmoved in spite of variations in the policy, politics and programme of the Congress.

Young India, 22-10-1925

201. NOTES

A Correction

In the issue of 8th October, in my Bihar Notes, I have said: "In Ranchi I was taken to Golcunda." This was a stupid slip on my part. The Bihari friends are now laughing at my geographical ignorance and tell me that Golcunda is not near Ranchi but near Purulia. I owe an apology to Purulia for the blunder. When, however, several villages and several places in the same village or town have to be visited on the same day and these performances follow in quick succession it is difficult for one to remember all the places accurately. I am, therefore, obliged to omit the mention of the names of many places and persons and simply confine myself to narration of events because at the moment I do not remember either the names of places or persons concerned. When, therefore, people find that the names of persons or places that in their opinion I should have mentioned have been omitted, let them understand that often the omission is unintentional and that it is due purely to my weak memory.

Spinning Essay

The reader will remember that early this year[1] Sjt. Rewashanker Jagjivan announced a prize of one thousand rupees to be given to the writer of the best essay on hand-spinning, its history and its use. These were the terms:

> (1) The essay should be in English in four parts; the first part to contain the history of hand-spinning and the khaddar (meaning hand-spun, including the celebrated *shubnum* of Dacca) trade of India before the British advent, the second part should trace the history of the ruin of hand-spinning and the khaddar trade, the third part should be an examination of the possibilities of hand-spinning and khaddar and a comparison between the Indian mill industry and hand-spinning and hand-weaving, the fourth part should examine the possibilities of achieving boycott of foreign cloth through the spinning-wheel. The essay should be supported by authoritative statistics and should have an appendix containing a list of all the reference books and authorities used by the author in support of his argument.
>
> (2) The essay may be as brief as the competitors wish to make it, consistently with the giving of a full record of facts and figures.

[1] On January 1. For details *vide* Vol. XXV, p. 531.

(3) The essay should be sent to the office of *Young India* by registered book post with the author's name on a separate sheet and should reach the office of *Young India* not later than 15th March next. The judges will be Messrs Shankerlal Banker, Maganlal K. Gandhi and myself. The result will be announced not later than 31st March 1925. The judges will reserve to themselves the right of rejecting all the essays if they fall below a certain standard. The prize will be paid to the winner on the announcement thereof. The right of publication will vest in the All-India Khadi Board in accordance with the donor's wishes.

Later Sjt. Ambalal Sarabhai was invited also to act as judge and he kindly consented. The time fixed for the delivery of the essay was 15th March. It was subsequently extended to 30th April and over sixty essays were received within the stipulated time. Each one of the judges carried on an independent examination. Two of us awarded the first prize to one, the third awarded the first prize to another and the fourth to a third. After mutual consultation we decided upon splitting the prize and distributing it between Sjt. S. V. Puntambekar and Sjt. N. S. Varadachari and the judges have proposed that either both of them or, if it is not possible for them to do so, whoever has the leisure and the inclination should combine the essays and give for publication the result of the combination. I am sorry that means a little more delay. All the delay that has up to now taken place has been unavoidable. The examination had to be and was thorough. That by itself took a great deal of time. The delay that has now taken place is equally inevitable, the idea being to give to the public a thoroughly good compendium on hand-spinning. I congratulate the prize-winners and I tender my congratulations also to those who have not been able to win the prize, for the effort made by them. For, some of the essays show a great deal of diligence.

Spinners, Please Note

Those who were in charge of the yarn that was received under the All-India Congress Committee resolution last year ask me to warn the spinners who become members of the A.I.S.A. against sending yarn that is not evenly spun and uniform. A quantity of bad yarn still lies unused. Just as bread that is stodgy and ill-baked is no bread, similarly yarn that is not easily woven is no yarn, and the condition of membership is not a thousand yards of self-spun yarn merely but a thousand yards per month of self-spun yarn *well-twisted and uniform* for A class and two thousand yards yearly of the same quality of self-spun yarn for

B class members. Therefore, if the secretaries are to do their duty well, it will be necessary for them not to take yarn that is considered to be below standard, and the standard while it need not be stiff will certainly be stiff enough to meet the elementary requirements of good weavable yarn. In cash subscriptions a bad coin cannot be accepted as a proper tender nor can bad yarn be accepted as proper tender when subscription is payable in yarn.

What Have You Done?

If you are a believer in spinning and if you have faith in the A.I.S.A., have you joined the Association? If you have not, will you write why you have not? If you have already joined, beyond sending your quota of well-spun and uniform yarn of your own spinning, what more do you propose to do to make khaddar universal? Have you invited the members of your own family and friends to join? Are you asking even the youngsters of your family to labour for the sake of the country? It is no mean training for the youngsters to learn during their childhood the lesson of intelligent self-sacrifice and understand the power of organization. Unorganized half hour's labour may mean nothing but labour given to an organization even from the remotest part of India has a potency that can revolutionize national life. It is no mean thing, again, for little children regularly every day to remember their country in a tangible manner. It will give them priceless discipline. In the act of demonstrating to the children the virtue of the simple little act of labour you will discover for yourself the implications of the charkha which you have little thought of. Please do not raise in front of you a mountain of difficulties by asking what use your labour can be when all India is lying supine. It is enough for you to do your little best, the rest will take care of itself. We have not the governance of the universe in our hands but we have our own in our hands and you will find that that is about all it is possible for us to do. But it is at the same time all in all. There is much truth in the homely English proverb: Take care of the pennies and the pounds will take care of themselves.

Lohani at Last

After I had given up all hope of finding Lohani, I received help from an unexpected quarter and I have now before me full details in the shape of newspaper cuttings. I observe that these cuttings are based upon my first reference to Lohani in the pages of *Young India*. The writers of these newspaper reports evi-

dently thought that I would see their references. They are obviously unaware of the fact that I do not get the time to read the numerous newspapers which the kind editors and proprietors send me in exchange for *Young India* or *Navajivan*. I have often requested and I repeat the request that those who seek to give me information or correct me or advise me through their writings in newspapers will kindly send me the cuttings in question. The writer in one of the cuttings expresses his surprise and astonishment that I should not know where Lohani is. I share the regret. But why astonishment? I have before now admitted my ignorance of the geography of my own country. In the vernacular school I had the barest outlines of the geography of India and, in the English school, from the very first standard I was called upon, on pain of being caned, to learn by heart the names of all the counties of England and many other foreign names which it gave me headache to pronounce and remember. Nobody taught me, and I am sure my teacher did not know, where Lohani was. Even Bhiwani, near which, I now see, Lohani is situated, was unknown to me before I went to the Punjab. Lohani then according to the cutting in my possession, is a little Hindu village, six miles from Bhiwani. The Hindu zamindars, the cutting proceeds, introduced in Lohani some Mussalmans. The Hindus and the Mussalmans are now fighting over a piece of land which, the Mussalmans claim, is consecrated and the Hindus claim has never ceased to be their property. The matter is before the courts. And there I must leave it. The writer of the newspaper article invites me to investigate the matter and pronounce my own opinion upon it. If I had the authority which I thought at one time I possessed, I would certainly investigate and prevent the quarrel from being decided in a court of law. But I must now plead my incapacity. I would, however, advise both the parties to approach those in whom they have confidence and seek their intervention.

A Total Denial

With regard to the charges of bribery, corruption and intimidation brought against the Swarajists of Madras in connection with the late Municipal elections and recently referred to in these columns, I have a long letter from Sjt. P. S. Doraiswamy Mudaliar totally and specifically denying every one of those charges and on the contrary holding that the defeated party was guilty of the very charges brought against the Swarajists. The correspondent contends that not only the illiterate masses threw in their lot with the Swarajists but so did also "many lawyers, medical

practitioners and many eminent men". And he says that they did so because they were disgusted with the tactics of the other party. I am not reproducing the whole of the letter because I have no desire to interest the readers of *Young India* in a local controversy and to open its columns for an interminable correspondence on it.

The Goanese Under Swaraj

A Goan friend asks:

> What would be your attitude and that of all Indians towards the Goanese who reside and earn their living in this country when swaraj is attained?

In briefest terms the answer is, that the attitude towards the Goanese will be exactly the same as towards any other Indian, for the Goanese are as much inhabitants of India as the inhabitants of any other part. That they are under another foreign Government can make no difference in their treatment. If the fear underlying this question is due to difference of religion, then, it has been repeatedly stated in these columns that swaraj is not intended for any one religion only but for all, and that those who are not born or domiciled in India would be fully protected, as fully as under the present Government, where they are not unduly favoured. That is the swaraj of my conception. What it is ultimately going to be depends upon what thinking humanity in India does in the long run. The Goanese population has the making of the India of the future as much in their hands as any other group. No one need therefore ask what will become of him under swaraj because no one but idiots and the imbecile will live on sufferance. Each one will guard his own individual liberty, if the State encroaches upon it. Not until many people acquire that power of resistance will India obtain real freedom.

When Crime Not Immoral

A fair friend sends me 'crisp sayings' by Dan Griffiths on crime and wants me to find room for them in these pages. Here are some extracts which a satyagrahi can readily subscribe to:

> State law is not necessarily moral. Crime is not necessarily immoral. There is a world of difference between illegality and immorality. Not all illegalities are immoral and not all immoralities are illegal.

Who can say that, whilst not to crawl on one's belly at the dictation of an officer might be an illegality, it is also an immorality? Rather is it not true that refusal to crawl on one's belly

may be illegal, but it would be in the highest degree moral? Another illuminating passage is the following:

> Modern society is in itself a crime factory. The militarist is a relative of the murderer and the burglar is the compliment of the stock jobber.

The third excerpt runs as follows:

> The thief in law is merely a person who satisfies his acquisitive instincts in ways not sanctioned by the community. The real thief is the person who takes more out of society than he puts into it. But society punishes those who *annoy* it, not those who *injure* it, the *retail* and not the *wholesale* offenders.

Seven Social Sins

The same fair friend wants readers of *Young India* to know, if they do not already, the following seven social sins:

Politics without principles
Wealth without work
Pleasure without conscience
Knowledge without character
Commerce without morality
Science without humanity
Worship without sacrifice

Naturally, the friend does not want the readers to know these things merely through the intellect but to know them through the heart so as to avoid them.

Young India, 22-10-1925

202. THAT ETERNAL QUESTION

However much I may wish to avoid it, the Hindu-Muslim question will not avoid me. Muslim friends insist upon my intervention to solve it. The Hindu friends would have me discuss it with them and some of them say I have sown the wind and must reap the whirlwind. Whilst I was in Calcutta, a Bihar friend had written to me in grief and anger telling me of the alleged kidnapping of Hindu boys and specially girls. I had written to him telling him point blank that I did not believe those allegations, but that, if he had proof and gave it to me I would gladly examine it, and if I was satisfied, I would denounce it although I might not be able to do any tangible good. Since then I have

had cuttings from newspapers describing in harrowing detail cases of kidnapping. I had told the friend that newspaper extracts could not be accepted as any evidence of the crime, that in many cases newspaper paragraphs were inflammatory, misleading and often absolutely false. There are Hindu and Muslim sheets that delight in blackguarding Mussalmans and Hindus respectively and if both of them could be accepted as true, both the parties were loathsome creatures. But I have proved to my own satisfaction that many of these reported cases are highly exaggerated if they are not false. I have, therefore, asked for such incontestable proofs as would be accepted in any court of law. The Titagarh case is certainly such a one. A Hindu girl had been kidnapped. She is supposed to have embraced Islam and in spite of the court's order she has not yet been produced so far as I am aware. What is more, respectable people are concerned in the non-production of the girl. When I was in Titagarh, nobody seemed prepared to shoulder the responsibility about the girl. At Patna, too, some startling information was given to me with corroborative evidence. I refrain at the present moment from going into it because it is not before me in its completed form. Such cases set one athinking and need the attention of all well-wishers of the country. There is then the question of music in front of mosques. I have heard of a peremptory demand for total cessation of music, soft or loud, at any time whatsoever in front of mosques. There is too a demand for the stopping of *arati* during prayer hours in temples in the neighbourhood of mosques. I heard in Calcutta that even boys passing by a mosque early in the morning and reciting *Ramanama* were stopped.

What is to be done? Recourse to law-courts in such matters is a broken reed. If I allow my daughter to be kidnapped and then go to court for protection, the latter would be powerless or, if the judge got angry over my cowardice, he would dismiss me from his presence with deserved contempt. Courts deal with ordinary crimes. General kidnapping of girls or boys is not an ordinary crime. People in such cases are expected to look after themselves. Courts help those who are largely able to help themselves. Theirs is supplementary protection. So long as there are weak people so long will there be someone to prey upon their weakness. The remedy therefore lies in organizing for self-defence. I could find it in me to justify the most violent defence in such cases unless the people concerned are capable of a non-violent defence. No doubt where girls or boys of poor and helpless parents are kidnapped, the case becomes much more complicated. There the

remedy has to be found not by the individual but by a whole clan or caste. A presentation, however, of authentic cases of kidnapping is a prime necessity before public opinion can be well-organized.

The question of music is much simpler than that of kidnapping. Either continuous music, *arati* or the repeating of *Ramanama* is a religious necessity or it is not. If it is a religious necessity no prohibition order by a court of law can be held obligatory. Music must be played, *arati* must be made and *Ramanama* repeated, cost what it may. If my formula were accepted a procession of the meekest men and women, unarmed even with lathis, would march with *Ramanama* on their lips, supposing that that was the bone of contention and draw down on their heads the whole of the Mussalman wrath. But, if they would not accept that formula, they would still proceed with the sacred name on their lips and fight every inch of the ground. But to stop music for fear of a row or because of an order of court is to deny one's religion.

But, then, there is the other side to the question. Is continuous playing of music even while passing mosques at prayer time always a religious necessity? Is repeating of *Ramanama* a similar necessity? What about the charge that the fashion nowadays is to organize processions purely for the sake of irritating Mussalmans and to make *arati* just at the time of prayer and to utter *Ramanama* not because it is held religiously necessary but in order to create an occasion for a fight? If such be the case it will defeat its own end and naturally, the zest being wanting, a court's order, a military display or a shower of brickbats would end the irreligious show.

A religious necessity must, therefore, be clearly established. Every semblance of irritation must be avoided. A mutual understanding should be sincerely sought. And where it is not possible, an irreducible minimum should be fixed making due allowance for the opposite sentiment and then without seeking the intervention of courts or in spite of a prohibition order, a fight must be put up for that minimum. Let no one charge me with ever having advised or encouraged weakness or surrender on matters of principle. But I have said, as I say again, that every trifle must not be dignified into a principle.

Young India, 22-10-1925

203. BIHAR NOTES

Function of Local Board Members

At Giridih the addresses presented to me contained interesting references and there was also, as in Chaibasa, an address from the Goshala Committee. The Local Board address referred to the bad condition of the roads under its charge. The justification given was shortage of funds. I had no hesitation in replying that shortage of funds was no excuse for keeping the roads in bad repair when Congressmen manned local boards. After all, roads were national property, Congressmen were national servants and when by entering local boards, they obtained charge of roads they were expected to keep them in good repair whether there were funds or not. They might put up on every good point a valiant fight with the Government, but their constructive work should in no way be allowed to be neglected. If they found that they could not properly discharge their trust they must resign. Want of funds was no cause for resignation because that could be made up for by voluntary effort. Let the members of such boards take up the pickaxe and the shovel, gird up their loins and themselves work at the roads and call a party of volunteers to asist them. They will earn the blessings of the public as also of the dumb cattle and command the respect of the superior authority. Indeed, in all municipal work everywhere, a large part of it is done by the councillors unofficially and with the voluntary support of the public. The late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain[1] turned Birmingham into a clean city studded with statues and other decorations, not merely through the paid service of the Corporation but by the voluntary support, pecuniary and other, of its citizens. The Municipality of Glasgow dealt with its plague epidemic in a summary and exemplary fashion only because the members of the Corporation received the willing and unstinted support of its citizens. The Municipality of Johannesburg, within my own experience, dealt with similar trouble in the same summary manner. It counted no cost too great for the eradication of plague, burnt down its market buildings and its location and had behind it the resources of its determined citizens. I told my audience that therefore I was asking for nothing

[1] 1836-1914; British statesman. He was mayor of Birmingham from 1873 to 1876.

heroic of the Local Board members by asking them to do the road repair themselves with the assistance of Congress volunteers if they had not enough funds. If we captured municipalities and local boards, we must be able to give a good account of ourselves in all the constructive work that was entrusted to our charge under statutory authority.

COW-PROTECTION

The Committee of the Giridih *goshala* said in its address that it had an annual income of nine thousand rupees in donations and an income of only two thousand rupees from milk, etc. The reader will recall that it is the same tale as that of Chaibasa. Much cry but little wool. An ideal *goshala* would supply the city of its domicile with cheap and wholesome milk from cattle of its own keeping and cheap and lasting foot-wear not out of slaughtered hide but out of the hide of dead cattle. Such a *goshala* will not be on one or two acres of ground in the heart of a city or in its immediate neighbourhood, but it would have, at some distance but within easy reach, fifty to a hundred acres of ground where a modern dairy and a modern tannery would be conducted on strictly business but national lines. Thus there would be no profits and no dividends to be paid and there would be also no loss incurred. In the long run such institutions dotted all over India would be a triumph of Hinduism and would be proof of Hindu earnestness about cow, that is, cattle protection and it would provide decent employment for thousands of men including educated men; for both dairy and tannery work require expert scientific knowledge. Not Denmark but India should be a model State for the finest dairy experiments and India should not to her shame have to export nine crore rupees worth of dead cattle hide annually and for her own consumption use slaughtered cattle hide. If such a state of things is a shame for India it is a greater shame for Hindus. I wish that all the *goshala* committees will take to heart the remarks I made in reply to the Giridih address[1] and make their *goshalas* into ideal dairies and tanneries and a refuge for all worn out and maimed cattle.

WHO SHOULD SPIN?

A third interesting reference in the Giridih address was to non-spinning by its labourers. Giridih has several mica mines. It has, therefore, many labourers working in those mines. These

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Giridih", 7-10-1925.

labourers get naturally a higher wage than they can possibly get from spinning and they are, therefore, not spinning at all. As a matter of fact, there need have been no such apologetic reference as was made in the address. The readers of *Young India* know that I have never suggested that those who are more lucratively employed should give up their lucrative employment and prefer hand-spinning. I have said repeatedly that those only are expected and should be induced to spin who have no other paying employment and that too only during the hours of unemployment. The whole theory of hand-spinning is based upon the assumption that there are millions of men and women in this land who are idle for at least four months in the year for want of some employment. There are only, therefore, two classes of people who are expected to spin, those who would spin for hire, whom I have already mentioned, and the thinking part of India who should spin for sacrifice by way of example and in order to cheapen khaddar. But whilst I could understand labourers not spinning, I could not understand their not wearing khaddar. There was no excuse for a single person in that vast audience not to wear khaddar. Giridih can produce and manufacture its own yarn and weave its own khaddar without any difficulty and, in any case can get all its supply of khaddar ready-made and comparatively cheap from the other parts of Bihar. But I notice that, whilst these addresses admit shortcomings about khaddar and the charkha, they are mentioned, I fear, not as an earnest of reform in the immediate future, but by way of consolation for continuing the same state of things. A confession is good only when it is intended to be followed up by a retracing; it is worse than useless when it is used to harden oneself against a change. I hope that the confessions made in the many addresses presented to me will be precursors of a definite change.

National Schools

From Giridih we came to Madhupur. There I was called upon to perform the opening ceremony of its new elegant-looking little Town Hall. In performing the opening ceremony and in congratulating the Municipality on possessing its own abode, I expressed the hope that the Municipality would make Madhupur a beauty-spot worthy of the climate and natural surroundings it possessed. The difficulties in the way of improving big cities like Calcutta and Bombay were very great. But in little places like Madhupur, if municipalities had a very small income, they had also no difficulty to face in keeping their areas spotlessly clean

and free from diseases. I visited, too, the national school which Madhupur boasts. The head master in the address which he read drew a gloomy picture of the prospects before him—decreasing attendance and decreasing pecuniary support from the people. He mentioned also that some parents withdrew their boys because hand-spinning was compulsory. The address asked me to point the way out of the difficulties mentioned. I replied that if the teachers believed in their mission, they need not be disappointed. Ups and downs in all new institutions were their natural lot. Their difficulties, therefore, were the teachers' testing time. Those convictions only could be described as stable which would stand the stress of storms. The teachers should, therefore, count no sacrifice too great if they believed that they had a message to deliver to their surroundings through their schools. They would then remain unconcerned whether there was only one boy or there were one hundred in the school, provided it was perfectly clear to them that they had done their best for the school and that it was not their shortcomings that estranged the parents and the boys but that the very principle for which they stood was repugnant to them. If they had faith in hand-spinning, they would not mind the parents withdrawing their children from the school. If they had retained spinning only because it was a fashion, or because the Congress resolution required it, and not because they had faith in it, they need not hesitate then to do away with spinning and retain the goodwill of the people. Time has arrived when national teachers have to make a definite choice for themselves, because, when new changes are made there are always some people who resent one or all of them. It is only the teacher with faith in himself and his cause who could resist opposition to the changes which he considers to be necessary and which alone, perhaps, justify the existence of his new enterprise.

Miscellaneous

From Madhupur we proceeded to the Purnea District, which meant a new surrounding and a new country. For, Purnea District is on the northern bank of the Ganges, and it lies to the north-east. All that district is really the Himalayan *terai*. The climate and the people are almost like those of Champaran. We crossed from Sakrigali Ghat to Maniari Ghat, a voyage of about two hours duration. We reached Maniari early in the morning. The people of this place presented a purse for the Deshbandhu Memorial. We went from Maniari by train to Katihar Junction

where there were the usual public meetings. The next day we went to Kishangunj where also there were the usual meetings and a purse. Kishangunj contains a large Marwari population. They had made a good collection. A deputation came to me complaining that although they were ready and willing to wear khaddar they could not get any in Kishangunj. They said that the whole of the cloth trade was in the hands of the Marwari merchants who sold only foreign cloth, because, the deputation said, the Marwari merchants told them it paid them best. I told the deputation, however, that whilst I would gladly speak to the Marwari friends, their excuse was really inadmissible because, if there was a large demand for khaddar in Kishangunj, they could open a co-operative store themselves. It was no use blaming the Marwari merchants who were after all in Kishangunj for their business. It was for those like the deputation who believed in khaddar to set the fashion, go to some trouble in stocking it, and then induce Marwari friends to take it up also. This, however, I saw, they were not prepared to do. I told them, too, that if they guaranteed a minimum sale I would undertake to persuade Rajendra Babu to open a khaddar depot in Kishangunj. This they were not prepared to risk. I spoke to the leading Marwari merchants who told me that, as a matter of fact, for some time some Marwaris did have some khaddar in their stores, but there was no great demand for it. And they admitted that there was no special effort made by the Marwari merchants to push khaddar before the public.

Confusion

From Kishangunj we went to Araria, and from Araria to Forbesgunj, the north-eastern extreme point of Bihar near which commences the Nepal border, and from where, I was told, on a clear day one could see the magnificent snowy range of the Himalayas. Before we reached Forbesgunj, I was inclined to congratulate Rajendra Babu and his band of workers upon the excellent control they had obtained upon the people in that, unlike as on previous occasions, the vast crowds of people were orderly, noiseless and exercised exemplary self-restraint by refraining from besieging me to touch my feet. I was, however, disillusioned at Forbesgunj, because the order broke down there. The crowd was immense. The meeting had to take place under the fierce sun. The people had been waiting since morning without any shade over-head. The noise and the din were terrible. It was impossible for me to get any quiet; and volunteers were unable to res-

train the vast crowd from coming to touch me. The fact is that not much work had been done there before. The volunteers were new to the task. The poor fellows tried their best. Nobody was to blame. It was a new situation and a new experience for them. And the people were not to be deprived of what they must have considered to be the only opportunity of coming near me and touching me. It is an affectionate superstition; but it is also most embarrassing for me. I spoke to them about khaddar, about the spinning-wheel, about temperance, gambling and the like; but I am afraid that it was all like foreign speech to them. Mysterious are the ways of God. Tens of thousands of people irresistibly drawn to someone or to something of whom or which they had but the vaguest idea. I do not know whether they profited by coming to see me, a perfectly strange being to them. I do not know whether it was worth while my going to Forbesgunj. Perhaps it is as well that we do not know the results of all we do, if only we do things for the service of God and humanity and do nothing which we know to be wrong.

Conclusion

From Forbesgunj we proceeded to Vishanpur which is about 25 miles from Purnea. It is a rough motor ride because there is no proper metalled road. There was a tremendous gathering in this village and I was surprised to see so much public spirit in a place so remote from the railway line. The people presented a good purse for the Memorial. A novel feature of this meeting was that a permanent platform was built for the meeting. It was nearly fifteen feet high. It is brick-built. Underneath is a khaddar store. The whole conception combines beauty with use. The most pleasing function in this village was a nicely built library and reading-room which I had the privilege of opening. There is a large open enclosure surrounding the library building, provided with marble benches, and the library itself is a memorial to the deceased wife of Chaudhry Lalchand. That in a place like Vishanpur such an up-to-date memorial should have been thought of shows a great advance in political education of the right sort. From Vishanpur we came back to Purnea which is the headquarters of the district, where practically the Bihar tour was concluded with the usual functions. The tour really concluded at Hajipur to which I was attracted four years ago by the youthful zeal of a band of workers through whose energy a national school was established. Purnea District has supplied over seventeen thousand rupees, a part of which is earmarked for the

Bihar (National) Vidyapith. The rest about fifteen thousand is for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. Throughout the Bihar tour, including this sum, the total collection for the Memorial amounted to about 50,000 rupees.

It is not without sorrow that I am leaving the simple and good people of Bihar. I hope, if all goes well, to finish the balance of the Bihar tour early next year, but I expect that the Biharis will show much further progress in khaddar and charkha during the intervening months. The whole of the stock of beautiful khaddar now lying in its khaddar stores should be cleared. There must be many members of the A.I.S.A. enrolled and centres where poor people are awaiting volunteers should be organized for spinning. The drink evil should be brought under control.

Young India, 22-10-1925

204. A DILEMMA

A friend finds himself in a dilemma. He is serving in an Indian concern that requires his services from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., I suppose with a break for dinner. But the employers do not prescribe the kind or the quality of the material of which his dress should be made. And by choice therefore he wears khaddar. A foreign firm, however, offers him double the salary with fewer hours of service but will not have his dress made of khaddar. Now the difficulty which faces him is this: If he accepts the foreign service, he can not only improve his material position but get enough time for spinning daily in which he believes but has to deny himself khaddar dress which he loves. If he remains where he is he has to slave for 12 hours, pinch himself and get no time for spinning. What is he to do? I have little hesitation in giving my opinion. Apart from the question of khaddar, for a self-respecting man the foreigner's tempting offer is totally unacceptable for the simple reason that it is coupled with an undue restraint upon one's liberty, especially when that restraint is against national interest and, from the fact stated is due to prejudice against khaddar. On merits, too, I would any day prefer liberty to wear khaddar although for want of time spinning may have to be sacrificed for the time being. If all were obliged to discard khaddar spinning will have no value. The virtue of spinning is not absolute but relative. If the product of spinning is not marketable, it would be a cruel mockery to call upon millions of semi-starved men and women to spin. The need

of the time is, therefore, popularization of khaddar wear. Spinning is undoubtedly necessary. But when there is a choice between spinning and wearing khaddar, naturally the latter has the undisputed preference. Spinning is required from those who want to add to their slender resources and that, too, during spare hours and without payments from those who have time to spare for giving even a few moments' labour in that particular form to the nation. In the case in point the will to spin being there, the time will certainly be found in due course. Probably, the correspondent has to go by tram or train to his office. Let him take the *takli* with him and give the odd moments to it. There are many within my knowledge who are thus utilizing their odd moments. I therefore hope that the correspondent will never, for any temptation, give up his khaddar wear. I had hoped that the prejudice against khaddar had died down in the foreign mercantile firms. The European merchants in Calcutta to whom I had the privilege of talking showed no prejudice against khaddar wear. I wish that influential European merchants who may see this paragraph will exert their influence to remove the prejudice reported by my correspondent. And it is high time for Indian firms to remodel their businesses so as to curtail the inordinately long hours for which their employees are detained. The world's experience shows that long hours do not mean more but actually less work. It simply requires a little courage and a little initiative to make the much-needed reform voluntarily and generously—a reform that is otherwise bound to come in any case. But, then, when it comes under pressure it will have lost all its grace. Shorter hours for employees is a world movement which nobody can stop. Will not the Indian Chamber of Commerce or some such mercantile association lead the way?

Young India, 22-10-1925

205. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

[*October 22, 1925*][1]

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I have your letter. Make whatever arrangements you think fit with Parsottambhai. I intend to take the amount from Revashankerbhai. Or we shall do whatever is needful. I am thinking of sending away the children. There is no end to illness here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7745. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

206. LETTER TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

Kartika Sud 5 [October 22, 1925][2]

REVERED RANCHHODBHAI,

It has become a problem to decide what route I should take on my way back from Kutch. Do you wish me to go *via* Morvi? And if so, do you think I should have the committee meeting of the Political Conference[3] there? If you permit me to go there I would certainly ask for your help in the khadi and cow-protection work. Your help does not mean the help of your State. If I do get it, well and good. But your own help I do want. It would be nice if I could have a reply by wire. If you send it to Bhuj I shall get it wherever I may be.

Regards from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

My right hand is aching; hence as far as possible I write with the left hand.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4113

[1] From the postmark

[2] Reference in the letter to the Kutch tour indicates that it was written in 1925.

[3] Kathiawar Political Conference

207. SPEECH ON BOARD STEAMER, DWARKA

October 22, 1925

s.s. *Rupavati* touched Dwarka on the way to Mandvi at the special request of the people of Dwarka who sent a deputation on board to accord Gandhiji their respectful greetings with a request that he might visit Dwarka on his return journey. In their address, the deputation pointed out with becoming humility that they were poor representatives of the high ideals of Hindu religion of which Dwarka is recognized a sacred place and that they wanted to profit by Gandhiji's advice and teachings.

Gandhiji gave suitable reply. He said that it might not be possible to visit Dwarka this time, but he urged that, if they wanted seriously to set about the task of reform, they might make a good beginning by discarding all foreign cloth and adopting the wear of pure khaddar for all purposes. He said that the sacred places of India should be the first and foremost in discarding foreign cloth. He also pointed out that, although Hindus were idol-worshippers, it was not the idol that they worshipped but the spirit of God inculcated in the idol, and he appealed to the deputation to try in their humble way to realize in life whatever appertained to the spirit of the idol they worshipped.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-10-1925

208. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHUJ[1]

October 22, 1925

I had expected from your welcome address that you would not be drawing a line between the *Antyajas* and others in this meeting, but when I saw that you had done so, I felt that my place was with the former. For, wherever I have gone I have described myself as a *Bhangi*. I do not make that claim out of vanity nor is it an instance of my ignorance or of Western influence on me. I make the claim wholly in a spirit of service, and that too after a life-long study of Hinduism and effort to live it by carefully following the example of my pious parents, and not, I repeat, under the influence of Western ideas. I have endeavoured to understand the relationship between the body

[1] Bhuj was the capital of the then princely State of Kutch; The speech is extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour.

and the Dweller within. I have studied the Shastras with as much care as is possible for a layman, and have also tried to put their teachings into practice. From my study of them and my experience of living in accordance with their teachings, I have come to the firm conclusion that if Hinduism clings to the practice of untouchability it will perish, Hindus will perish and India will perish. As I discuss the subject with innumerable shastris and pundits in the course of my tours in the various parts of the country, I become daily more confirmed in my view. I frankly tell you, therefore, that if, holding the views that I do, I am an untouchable in your eyes, with whom it is proper that all contact should be avoided, you should be firm and keep away from me, and ask me to end my visit in a day. Far from causing me pain, you will make me happy by acting in this way. I will think that Kutch has self-respect, that it has courage and its people are not afraid of expressing their difference from even a reputedly big man. If, therefore, you ask me to leave, you will be doing good not only to yourself but also to the *Antyajas* and to me. You may rest assured that your forsaking me will make no difference to our relations. You will show no disrespect to me by forsaking me, but you show extreme disrespect to me by inviting me here and then slighting the *Antyajas*. I have identified myself with Hinduism. I live for it and wish to die for it. If I felt today that my death would benefit Hinduism, I would embrace death with the same love and eagerness with which I embrace you here. I, who serve this Hinduism, believe that the practice of untouchability is a great blot on it. *Antyajas* are dear to me as my very life. Therefore just as a lover of *Ramayana* would run miles away from a place where the holy name of Rama was being slighted, I too cannot stay where *Antyajas* are despised. I am bound to run away from such a spot, for I would feel deeply hurt there. You have said flattering things about my satyagraha. Well then, I take this opportunity to give an object-lesson in it. Let the *Antyajas* come in, or permit me to go and sit in their midst. But remember that it will not be proper for you to do anything out of false regard for me and with the thought in your mind that you will take a bath after returning home. I had, through the letter which I addressed to you, warned you before coming on this visit. If, therefore, you permit the *Antyajas* to come and sit in your midst, let it be with the conviction that you are doing a virtuous act and not committing a sin, that you are purifying Hinduism and not defiling it. If, however, you believe that you will be commit-

ting a sin by letting them come in, do please permit me to go and sit in their midst. No matter which course you adopt, if you act with decision and without fear of or false regard for anyone, I will think that you have presented me something of greater worth than this silver spinning-wheel and this silver casket containing your address. But consider: if, as they did at Mangrol,[1] you let the *Antyajas* in today but ill-treat them afterwards, you will be doing them disservice, not service. I should also like to add that the reform which you may adopt today should be adopted after due thought, should be adopted after weighing your strength and with the idea of following it permanently.

We have now to take the next step. We shall have to carry out a silent movement as they do in an army manœuvre. The majority of the audience desires that the *Antyajas* should not cross the fencing in front of them. Please, therefore, permit the volunteers to lift the table there and put it silently on the side reserved for *Antyajas*. You will now hear me complete the rest of my speech from that side. It would hurt me to go on with my speech sitting here, yielding to your love or persuasion. I shall feel happy if you let me sit there. Untouchability cannot be abolished through force; it can be abolished only by satyagraha, by the strength of love. Reforms in matters of religion can be effected only by the reformer suffering voluntarily by his undergoing *tapascharya*, and in no other way. They cannot be effected by anyone acting with anger or resentment or hatred in his heart. It is the duty of a satyagrahi not to bear ill will even mentally towards a person opposing the cause of truth. The fact of a majority being on your side has not hurt me, and has certainly not made me angry. Now, let everyone remain where he is; I alone will go over to that side and take my seat there, for I have a special duty in this place and on this occasion. As I had once found it my special duty to keep an *Antyaja* girl with me and bring her up in the Ashram, so it is my special duty today to go to that side and address you from there. You should remain seated where you are; you will then be able to hear me in complete silence.

If either Shastras or history taught us that a kingdom could be ruled only by a person like Rama, I would have been an implacable enemy of monarchy. But the very same history which tells us of Ravana also tells us of Rama, and proclaims to

[1] In Saurashtra; Gandhiji met the *Antyajas* at Mangrol on April 7, 1925.

the world that Ravana's rule did not last for all time, that victory was Rama's. A king's rule can endure only if he introduces dharma into his rule. I would offer my worship to the government of a king—I long for such a government—under whose rule no one would ever die of hunger, a girl might safely move about where she willed and no wicked person would dare to cast evil glances at her, a king who looked upon his subjects as his children and all women, other than his wife, as his mothers or daughters, who never drank and had no addictions, who would see to the safety of his subjects as they slept before himself retiring for the day and ensured that they had enough to eat before he ate himself. I wish to see a bond of love between the Princes and their subjects in order that we might have rulers of this type. When we have them, there will be no famine and starvation in the country, no immorality and no people addicted to drinking. At present, however, we have all these things in the Indian States. What does this fact signify? That the Princes have forgotten their dharma—their dharma of protecting the lives, the properties and the dharma of their subjects, that they have not been able to preserve purity of character. The Shastras, on the other hand, proclaim with all the emphasis at their command that even the race in which Krishna was born perished while he lived as soon as the three evils of immorality, drinking and gambling entered it. Krishna had the misfortune to be a witness to the complete destruction of the Yadava race. That is why I say that the Princes of Kutch should so rule their State that the subjects would have no cause for complaint against them. As long as the Prince has a good character and is a good ruler, the subjects will certainly help him, assist him in the administration of justice and pay the taxes. What should they do, however, if he becomes oppressive in his rule? The Shastras say that in such circumstances it becomes the duty of the subjects to put their grievances frankly before the ruler, for it should be borne in mind that if the saying "As the ruler, so the subjects" is true, it is equally true to say "As the subjects, so the king." This very thing is expressed differently in an English saying: "A people get the government that they deserve." In other words, a ruler and his subjects always act and react on each other. The truthfulness, vigour and strength of purpose displayed by the subjects cannot but produce an effect on the ruler. Likewise, the ruler's misconduct and disregard for truth cannot but have their effect on the subjects. What, then is the duty of the people of Kutch, a people who have the spirit of adventure in them, who cross the

oceans and journey to distant lands, who go round the whole earth and return with riches? If the grievances which you have hinted at are real, why do you fear to place them all before the ruler with due courtesy and with full regard for him? How can I express any views about them without first discussing them with the Maharao? If they are real, I tell you the remedy lies with you, not the remedy of uncivil and thoughtless resistance but that of truth and love. Where truth, courage and love are found together, nothing is impossible. I advise you, on the strength of the experience I have gathered during thirty years of vigilant political life, that you should once acquaint the Maharao with all your grievances, with firmness, with the fullest regard for truth and with due civility. Let my words sink in your heart and follow the advice I have given; you will then realize that I have placed in your hands a remedy of unfailing effect.[1]

If people do not like this arrangement, I am even ready to address a meeting attended only by classes other than *Antyajas*, but I would not go to a meeting where space is reserved for *Antyajas* at some distance. Frame your programme, therefore, with due regard for my views and temperament. I state, not merely as a formality, but deliberately and as a truth, that the meeting exercised proper judgment in acting as it did today, and expressed nothing but its love for me. I am grateful to you for respecting my wishes and carrying out the suggestion I made. You have proved by this behaviour of yours that you are better people than the residents of Mangrol and Bhadaran[2].

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 1-11-1925

[1] Gandhiji then suggested to the workers, in regard to the arrangements for the next day's meeting, that the people should be informed in advance that *Antyajas* would be permitted to sit with others, but that a special space would be reserved for those who did not like such an arrangement.

[2] In the Kheda district of Gujarat; on February 11, 1925, Gandhiji addressed a public meeting there in which the *Antyajas* were made to sit in a separate enclosure.

209. TELEGRAM TO TULSI MAHER[1]

[On or before *October 23, 1925*][2]

SHOCKED HEAR YOUR GROWING WEAKNESS. YOU MUST TAKE MILK OTHER THINGS AND EVEN CHANGE COLDER CLIMATE IF REBUILDING IMPOSSIBLE THERE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 6522

210. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BHUJ[3]

October 23, 1925

I have had a meeting with the Maharaoshri. He heard me patiently. I put before him everything, all your grievances, excepting one unimportant matter. I cannot say what the outcome will be. I can tell you, however, that if you follow the advice I gave yesterday the remedy for your grievances is quite simple. Why is it that even our Princes feel that they should listen to me? It is because they all know that I speak out what I have in my mind. I observe due courtesy in all that I say, and there is sweetness behind my strong words; there is no bitterness in my heart, no unworthy thought or hatred or any other ignoble feeling. There is such power in truth itself that one need not resort to exaggeration to add to it. When I say that "one should speak the truth, and say what is agreeable", I mean that our truth should be inspired by love and not by hatred or violence. Today, though we recognize the value of truth, we have shown ourselves bankrupt of it. You should, therefore, tell the ruler whatever you feel to be true without any fear in your heart —this is not only your right but your duty.

The cause of cow-protection has suffered through the folly of the so-called "servants of the cow". A hundred times more cows are slaughtered for commercial purposes than are killed by Muslims as sacrificial offering. The saughter-houses in the country exist to serve the needs not only of Muslims but of the army too

[1] A Nepalese constructive worker

[2] The telegram is quoted in a letter, dated 23-10-1925, from Mahadev Desai to Kishorelal Mashruwala.

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

and to supply hides. Slaughter-houses pay because of the ignorance of the rich in the country about what Hinduism means, and because of a lack of genuine religious consciousness among our *Vaishnavas* and our priests and because of their laxity. Cows are owned by Hindus and, therefore, it is none other than the Hindus who sell cows for slaughter. All those who wear shoes use the hide of slaughtered animals, for the hide of dead cattle is not easily tanned. If we wish to save the cattle that would otherwise be slaughtered there is no other way but for the well-to-do to interest themselves in the trade in milk and hides. I appeal to you for funds so that it may be possible to take up all this work.

You want me to collect funds to be used exclusively in Kutch. Why should I come to you to collect funds for that purpose? You yourselves can do that. The money collected by me is for the poor in the country. When in 1921 we collected 38 lakhs from Bombay, did any resident of Kutch stipulate that his contribution should be spent in Kutch? I would not accept a pie from my friends in Kutch if they offer money on any such condition. I ask for money to serve the much-suffering cows in the country, to help poor women protect their honour and the starving millions to get some food. If, then, you adopt the short-sighted policy of "money from Kutch to be spent in Kutch", there will be no hope for the country. If you have no faith in my capacity and my judgment to spend your money properly, you had better give me nothing. Please remember that Kutch is a tiny drop in the sea that is India; this drop must make a sacrifice for the vast country. You should on your own collect money to meet the needs of Kutch. It does not befit you or me that you should use my name to collect it. Have the Marwaris given me money on condition that I should spend it in Marwar? They gave me money—one lakh rupees—for the propagation of Hindi in Madras and are giving generously now for the cause of cow-protection. For Bihar, they gave me a big pile. Only yesterday, I collected a very large sum from Marwaris living in Bihar, none of whom asked me to spend a part of it in Marwar. I heard such a condition being made only by residents of Kutch, and I was extremely pained by it. It is your duty to give money for the whole of the country, for you get it from the whole country, from your trade in and with all parts of it. You must make a return for what you receive.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-11-1925

211. HOW TO WORSHIP GOD

A Parsi gentleman has written to me from Persia. He has addressed to me some profound questions[1] which I quote below in his own words. At two or three places where he has used English words I have given their Gujarati equivalents instead.

If even a single leaf does not stir without the will of God, what is there left for man to do? This is a question dating back to times immemorial and it will always continue to be asked in the future; however, the answer is included in the question itself as it is God Himself who has given us the capacity to ask it. All our actions are governed by laws, and the same is true of God. As our laws and our knowledge are imperfect, we can violate these laws in a civil or uncivil manner. Being all-knowing and omnipotent God never violates His own laws. These admit of no improvements or additions. They are immutable. Our freedom lies in the capacity bestowed on us to think, distinguish and choose between good and evil in various ways. This freedom is strictly limited. It is so limited that a learned person has said that it is even less than that enjoyed by a sailor on board a ship, to walk on the deck. However little it may be, there is this freedom and even though it is not much, it is sufficient, at any rate, to enable a human being to attain *mukti*[2] through it. Destiny and man's effort to attain the aims of life go hand in hand. However, destiny does not thwart the purpose of anyone who treads the road of *mukti*.

Hence, all that now remains to consider is how to serve or worship God. He can be served in one way alone. To serve the poor is to serve God. By serving even an ant, one serves Him. It is He who gives the tiny particle [of food] to the ant and the six maunds to the elephant. Anyone who refrains from trampling an ant also serves it; one who does not intentionally harm it will not harm other animals or his fellow men. At each place and at each point of time service assumes a different form, although the sentiment involved in it is the same. In serving those who suffer, one serves God. Discretion should be exercised in this service. There is no reason to believe that one is doing nothing but service by giving grains to the

[1] Not translated here

[2] Deliverance from phenomenal existence, as the end of life

hungry. It is a sin to provide food for an idle person who makes no effort and depends on others for food. It is a meritorious act to provide him with an occupation and, if he refuses to work, to let him starve is to render service to him. God's name should be chanted and it is necessary to worship Him with rituals as this leads to self-purification, which in its turn enables man to find his own way. However, ceremonial worship by itself does not constitute the service of God. It is a means of doing that service. It is for this reason that Narasinh Mehta has sung: "Nothing is achieved by bathing and worshipping, or counting one's beads and chanting His name."

And from this reply we get the answer to the third question which is as follows. What is the aim of life? It is to know the Self. In the words of Narasinh Mehta, "So long as the essence of the Self is not realized, all our efforts are in vain." This realization of the Self, or Self-knowledge, is not possible until one has achieved unity with all living beings—has become one with God. To accomplish such a unity implies deliberate sharing of the suffering of others and the eradication of such suffering.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 25-10-1925

212. *MY NOTES*

Get Enrolled in the Spinners' Association

Those who are contributing yarn spun by themselves to the Congress should now send in their names to the Spinners' Association. All those belonging to this group can send in yarn every month if they choose to do so or 12,000 yards in a single instalment. A large sum is being spent on postage and of this as much as possible should be saved. It is, therefore, desirable that all the yarn be sent together. Moreover, it is also hoped that many persons can send their yarn in the same parcel. With some such motive Shri Dastane handed over to me, on my way, at Bhusawal Station, yarn spun by fifty-seven members along with their names and addresses. Yarn from all places should start coming in now.

The Meaning of Khadi

Just as some people wear coarse material thinking it is khadi although it has been spun and woven in a textile mill, others

persist in the belief that khadi necessarily means thick and coarse cloth made of hand-spun yarn. This latter belief is not borne out by facts. Hand-woven cloth made of hand-spun yarn is of course khadi, however fine it may be. It may be made of cotton, silk or even of wool. One should wear whichever of these one happens to find convenient. The khadi from Andhra is very fine. In Assam, one can get some khadi made of silk. Woollen khadi is made in Kathiawar. In other words, the only criterion of khadi is its being hand-spun and hand-woven. Ordinarily, hand-spun khadi is found to be coarse and thick, hence, some people erroneously believe that khadi can only be of this type, though in fact fine khadi of sixty to eighty count yarn is also made. Nevertheless, those who have used thick khadi know that the touch of coarse rough khadi is soft to the body and, being rough, it affords better protection to the skin.

THE KANPUR CONGRESS

There is not much time left before the Kanpur Congress.[1] The reception committee was faced with unexpected difficulties. The obstacle that the committee met in getting land has now been removed. However, in order to complete the preparations within the time left, a large number of volunteers and large sums of money are required. My expectations are that the reception committee will receive that help and the work will be speeded up.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 25-10-1925

213. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

Kartika Sud 8 [October 25, 1925][2]

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

When I heard that you had fever, I was not worried. Now Bhai Kishorelal writes that your frame has become very weak and the weakness persists and yet you adhere to your milkless diet. I have already, on receiving that letter, sent you a wire.[3] I hope you have resumed taking milk. I hope you have taken no

[1] The Kanpur Congress was held in the last week of December, 1925.
[2] From the postmark
[3] *Vide* "Telegram to Tulsi Maher", on or before 23-10-1925.

vow. I approve of experiments in giving up milk, but until I succeed in my experiment, I would not agree to my colleagues trying it at the cost of their health. So I cannot tolerate your abstaining from milk even after you have become weak. If you have not started taking it, please do so. Take only milk and fruit for the present. As you get stronger, have wheat, rice, etc. In case you are suffering from constipation, go to a cooler place, if necessary.

Write to me a detailed letter. May God give you good health soon!

Give the enclosed letter to Shanti and Menali. If you send the reply to Mandvi, I shall get it there.

Today I intend to leave Bhuj.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6521

214. *LETTER TO FULCHAND SHAH*

KUTCH KOTADA,
Sunday [*October 25, 1925*][1]

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. You must have received the Rs. 1,000. As for Gondal, as long as the people there do nothing you and I cannot do much.

What can others do with an immoral family? The reason why something can be done in regard to Shivajibhai[2] is that we have a hand in the management of his affairs. But we do not have the right to interfere in the affairs of others who run such institutions. We have comparatively less right to interfere in Charitravijayji's case.

We cannot go about judging the world. So I wish you not to worry about Gondal or other such States. The best way to reform the world is to reform oneself. Therefore, it is only right that one should take up duties which come naturally to one. If this is true, I think it proper to have patience with Gondal. We shall talk over it further when we meet.

[1] Gandhiji was in Kotada on this date.
[2] He had established three Ashrams at Madhda in Kathiawar.

Moreover, I gather from your letter that you think that I have received plenty of evidence about the evils in Gondal. But I have not. I have no evidence at all. I had told the Committee[1] that I tried my best to meet the Ruler of Gondal but I did not succeed. Just now I know only one immediate remedy, that those who are volunteers should increase their strength. Even this will improve things in the future.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original: C.W. 2828. Courtesy: Fulchand Shah

215. *LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH*

Monday [October 26, 1925][2]

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter about the sub-castes. We shall soon be meeting somewhere and then we shall discuss your draft. Then we shall do what is necessary.

I have written a personal letter to Patwari, saying that if he is agreeable I shall go to the Ashram *via* Morvi where we can hold the Committee meeting. I have not yet received a reply to it. I should have. If I get no reply, I shall go *via* Jamnagar, but will not hold the meeting there. It seems now there will be no time left for it. So we shall have to hold the meeting at the Ashram. I must reach the Ashram on the 7th.

If you have any suggestion to offer, write to me at Mandvi. I shall be in Mandvi on the 29th and 30th; in Anjar on Sunday and Monday.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5723

[1] Presumably, Executive Committee of the Kathiawar Political Conference

[2] In the letter, Gandhiji asks the addressee to send a reply to him at Mandvi, Kutch. He was there on October 30 and 31. The preceding Monday fell on October 26.

216. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Monday [October 26, 1925][1]

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter. I hear also that you have sustained burns. I shall be reaching there shortly, so more when we meet. Hope your hand is completely all right. I have had a long talk with Dahyabhai and shall have another in a day or two. We will come to some decision before we reach Ahmedabad. As for you, I have already made up my mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 32

217. NOTES

WOOL OR COTTON

A friend enquires whether the hill tribes who never use cotton, who have plenty of wool and who always wear woollen clothing can become members of the Congress by spinning and sending woollen yarn instead of cotton yarn. The hillsmen can certainly send wool yarn and become Congress members. The emphasis is not on cotton, but on hand-spinning. And I do hope that Congressmen who are working in the hills will enrol as many wool spinners as they can for both the Congress and the All-India Spinners' Association.

A SPINNER'S DIFFICULTY

A correspondent writes: "The postage required for sending yarn subscription to the A.I.S.A. is greater than the value of yarn to be sent. Is there no way of saving this cost? Must all packets be registered? Or if not, may they be sent 'not-paid'?" This objection was considered when in terms of the Ahmedabad resolution yarn had to be sent to the All-India Khadi Board. It is impossible to save the postage in its entirety at the present

[1] From the source

moment or at any moment altogether. But much may be saved even now. Registration of packets containing yarn is totally unnecessary. It would not, however, do to send 'not-paid' packets. The postage must be borne by the senders; but there is no reason why everyone should send his or her yarn separately. In every village or street wherever members may be living within easy reach of one another, one party should collect all the yarn at one place and send the whole of it in one parcel. This can be easily arranged by someone taking the initiative and making himself responsible. Then, again, it is not obligatory to send the yearly subscription in twelve instalments. Those who have got ample leisure may spin their twelve thousand in one month and send the whole in one parcel or, it may be sent in as many instalments as is convenient. The question then arises what will become of the idea of spinning regularly every day. Regular spinning should be done although the subscription may be paid and yarn thus spun may be utilized for one's own personal use. The obligation of regular spinning is distinct from the obligation of sending twelve thousand yards of self-spun yarn. And it is necessary in the interest of national economy to spin twelve thousand yards in the quickest possible time so as to save postage. I hope after some time arrangements will be made for establishing receiving depots in suitable centres so as to avoid postage.

One Thousand Rupees Prize

A text-book on cow-protection has been found to be a necessity. An American friend who is interesting himself in the question of cow-protection wanted me to supply him with a book upon it. I failed to find for him a volume that would give him all the information that he needed. I therefore approached Sjt. Revashanker Jagjivan and asked him whether he would issue a prize for a cow-protection essay. He has kindly consented to pay one thousand rupees for the best essay on the subject. The terms are that the essay should be delivered at Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, to the Secretary, All-India Cow-Protection Association, on or before March 31, 1926. It may be in English, Sanskrit or Hindi. It should deal with the origin, meaning and implications of cow-protection quoting texts in support. It should contain an examination of the Shastras and find whether there is any prohibition in the Shastras for conducting dairies and tanneries by Associations interested in cow-protection. It should trace the history of cow-protection in India and methods adopted to

achieve it from time to time. It should contain statistics giving the number of cattle in India and examine the question of pasture land and the effect of the Government policy about pasture land in India and suggest remedy to be adopted for securing cow-protection. I am inviting Acharya Anandshanker Dhruva and Sjt. C. V. Vaidya to allow themselves to be appointed judges of the essays to be received. The terms of competition are subject to change within a fortnight from the date of publication so as to allow me to receive the opinions of friends interested in cow-protection from the standpoint of the All-India Cow-Protection Association. And if no change is announced within that fortnight, the foregoing terms may be regarded as final.

Forthcoming Congress

Cawnpore has been experiencing, but also fortunately overcoming, exceptional difficulties in its preparations for the forthcoming Congress. The difficulty about finally securing the plot of land required has been only just settled. It has domestic quarrels also. Dr. Murarilal and his Committee will, I hope, get all the assistance they may need, whether in men or money. Success of a Congress session largely depends upon the application, intelligence, tact and resourcefulness of those who compose the Reception Committee, and the Committee's success depends upon the active co-operation and goodwill of local people. I hope that the women of Cawnpore will remember that it is a daughter of India who is to preside over the deliberations of the Congress for the first time in its long and chequered history. I hope that there will be an able corps of women volunteers ministering to the needs and the comforts of the female delegates and visitors who may be expected to attend the Congress in larger numbers than before.

For Members A.I.S.A.

I propose to publish from week to week, or at longer intervals if the A.I.S.A. is unable to supply weekly, names of members who may send their quota. This will be the only receipt issued by the Association. The plan will not only ensure accuracy but save postage and some portion of routine work at the Central Office. Those who do not find their names acknowledged in these columns should complain directly to the Central Office. In sending their yarn members should take care to give their full name, full address including the taluk and the Congress province, the class of membership and whether the member desires

to become a member of the Congress or not. It should be noted that no extra subscription is necessary for the Congress. Thus sending of 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn entitles the sender if so desired to become enrolled as member of the Congress as also of the Association. There should also be a card attached to every hank of yarn containing the number of yards, the measurement of the winder, the weight, the count, the variety of cotton used and whether the yarn is spun on a wheel or on a *takli*. If members will take care to send in these particulars accurately, they will save a large amount of national time.

SPURIOUS KHADI

A friend sends me a pictorial card taken from spurious khadi woven in some of the Indian mills. It has printed upon it a charkha with a basket full of slivers and a few bobbins with yarn wound upon them lying in front. My correspondent tells me that such imitation khaddar is manufactured in almost all the Indian mills and such stuff is sent here by Japan also. He adds that poor people, who know that they should wear khaddar when they see a charkha stamp upon it and upon applying at the shops have stuff looking like khaddar given to them, unquestioningly buy it and flatter themselves with the belief that they have done something towards the alleviation of the economic distress of India. It is a thousand pities that mill-owners should lack all patriotic fervour and, in order to swell dividends, or, maybe, now, to be able to keep the mills going, pay no regard to the national will. And yet people are not wanting who expect with the assistance of Indian mills to achieve the boycott of foreign cloth. The tremendous mistake underlying such belief consists in supposing that the mill industry can ever be utilized for the national purpose before khaddar has attained a proper commercial footing. I doubt not that one day all the mills will fall in line with the great national purpose; but that time will not come before khaddar can hold its own against the whole world, in other words, before the national taste has undergone such a revolution that the general body of people would refuse to wear anything but khaddar and they will have been so far educated as to be able without difficulty to distinguish between real khaddar and the base imitation.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

All communications intended for the All-India Cow-Protection Association should be addressed to the Secretary of the Association at Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, and not at Bombay.

Young India, 29-10-1925

218. INTERROGATORIES

Whilst I was at Lucknow the sub-editor of the *Indian Daily Telegraph* handed me some interrogatories for my answer. They are rather interesting. I therefore reproduce the most important of them with my answers.

1. Do you propose to launch mass civil disobedience within one year, or within any specified time?

I entertain no present hope of being able to launch mass civil disobedience within any measurable distance of time.

2. Do you believe in the dictum 'the end justifies the means'?

I have never believed in the dictum.

3. A year ago it was reported that you intended to launch civil disobedience, and once launched you would go on with it, even if sporadic violence occurred. Absolute non-violence being impossible on the part of the masses, will you now take the risk of a modicum of violence (minimum, so far as it lies in your power) and launch civil disobedience?

What I said a year ago and what I wish to repeat now is that whatever step I may take now will be, I hope, not conditional, but absolute and irrevocable. Whenever I have suspended civil disobedience I have done so not by reason of any outbreak of violence, but upon the discovery of such violence as had been initiated or encouraged by Congressmen who should have known better. Any outbreak of violence would not have brought about suspension, as, for instance, the Moplah outbreak. But Chauri Chaura did for the simple reason that persons connected with the Congress were involved in it.

4. In the Calcutta riot case, you laid the blame at the door of the Hindus. The Marwari Association or some Hindu organization challenged your verdict and produced evidence to prove the guilt of the Muslims in giving sufficient cause for provocation to the Hindus. You promised to publicly modify your verdict if you found your previous opinion mistaken. Will you now publicly modify your previous verdict?

I have seen nothing to modify my previous verdict.

5. You have consented to accept address from the Municipal Board (which is now in the hands of the Swarajist Party), but you have avoided address from the Hindu Sabha. Why do you make this in-

vidious distinction against a body which represents the Hindu community, to which you belong?

I have never avoided address from the Lucknow Hindu Sabha. On the contrary, I told them that I would gladly accept their address when I paid a visit to Lucknow. The Swarajist Municipality approached me later and pressed me to accept its address even whilst I was passing through Lucknow. The Hindu Sabha might have done likewise. There was no question of avoidance. I simply thought that the Sabha would not want to present me with an address whilst I was merely passing through Lucknow specially as the Sabha had desired to discuss with me the Hindu-Muslim tension in Lucknow. It will be remembered that I gladly accepted the Hindu Sabha address in Sitapur.

6. The Aminabad Park *arati-namaz* question is hanging fire for more than a year. Will you kindly give your decision, if both parties promise to abide by it?

I have dealt with this matter in my U.P. Notes.

7. As a Hindu what is your candid opinion about the question?

I have no opinion, as I do not know the facts. If I had made up my mind beforehand, I could not consent to arbitrate even if both the parties were willing to abide by my award.

8. Hindus never object to Muslim music during Moharrum, or at any time. Why should Muslims object to Hindu music? Are the Hindus not entitled to safeguard their religious rights by every means?

This question deals with two questions of fact about which I know nothing. As to the third part of the question, Hindus are entitled to defend their religious rights not by every means but by every truthful and, in my opinion, non-violent means.

9. At Patna two kidnapped Hindu girls were produced before you. As a Hindu, what steps do you advise the Hindus to take against the growing evil of kidnapping throughout India?

I dealt with this delicate question last week.[1]

10. Are not the Hindus justified in organizing themselves, not for any aggressive action against Muslims or others, but for safeguarding their religious rights and stamping out such evils as kidnapping, etc., as also for the physical, social, moral and material advancement of the Hindu community?

[1] *Vide* "That Eternal Question", 22-10-1925.

I do not suppose anybody can possibly object to the organization such as the question mentions. I certainly do not object.

11. Maulana Shaukat Ali sent a message through you to the Bihar Khilafat Conference. If Lala Lajpat Rai or Pandit Malaviya send a message through you to a Hindu Conference, will you have any objection to it?

Maulana Shaukat Ali never sent through me any message to the Bihar Khilafat Conference; but if he had, I would certainly have carried any message from him, provided it was unobjectionable. And I should certainly carry out a similar commission entrusted to me by Pandit Malaviyaji or Lala Lajpat Rai.

Young India, 29-10-1925

219. U.P. NOTES

A Rickety Platform

At Hajipur my Bihar tour ended. It was all orderliness and noiselessness at Hajipur. Though I was lodged in the national school huts in front of which the huge public meeting took place, the volunteers were disciplined and the crowds were previously informed through notice and otherwise that I was ill able to bear the strain of noise, rush and the touching of feet. In spite, therefore, of there being hundreds of men crowding round the school premises, I had perfect quiet. Of all the national schools in Bihar, this is perhaps the best managed and the best manned, Janakdhari Babu, a non-co-operating *vakil* with a character of great beauty, being the principal. There was a purse, too, of nearly Rs. 5,000 at Hajipur. With this pleasant ending and the ceremony at Sonepur of opening a Sevashram, chiefly for the purpose of attending to the comfort and requirements of thousands of visitors who annually flock to Sonepur in connection with a unique fair that takes place there every full moon day of the first month of the Hindu year and which draws the finest horses, elephants and cattle to the Sonepur fair, the Bihar tour ended and I entered U.P., Ballia being the first place.

The travel to Ballia, although requiring only four hours, was most trying. The meeting there was a terrible ordeal and a contrast to all I had seen and experienced in Bihar. It was a slow train that carried me to Ballia from Chhapra. There were stations every few minutes. Vast crowds gathered at every station and made a most noisy demonstration which the volunteers were

unable to control. I know that it was all blind and excessive affection. I was to have gone to Ballia in 1921. I was unable to do so then. The people, therefore, were almost incredulous, but when I actually did go there, they became delirious with joy. The volunteers could keep no control. As soon, however, as I could get them to listen to me, and understand my appeal for the Deshbandhu Memorial Fund, they paid freely. At Ballia itself, the crowd at the station was most unmanageable. Rev. Mr. Perill of the American Mission had kindly brought his car to the platform which I could reach with the greatest difficulty but which alone made it possible to pass unhurt through the pressing crowd. From the station, we went directly to the public meeting. There was a huge and lofty platform which, I saw at a glance, had been erected by an amateur and was wholly unsafe for the number of persons which the floor space could accommodate and for which it was intended. There were nearly seven addresses. All the members connected with these should naturally have been on the platform. The stairs leading to the platform were shaky, slippery and unsafe. The platform swung to and fro when anybody walked on it. It could hardly bear the weight of ten people and it was dangerous even for one person at a time to walk on some parts of it. The chairman at once recognized that, if a tragedy was to be avoided, all but myself should remove themselves from the platform. So they gently hurried down, leaving Rajendra Babu in charge of me. Those who were to read the addresses came one at a time and in spite of these precautions, it was not at all certain that the whole structure might not come down at any moment. This was by no means my first experience of a dangerously weak platform. I recall at least two accidents. This was the weakest I had seen. The very appearance was enough for an ordinary, trained eye to detect the weakness, but those in charge had no experience and evidently the man who was entrusted with the erection had none. Let this Ballia instance be a warning to Congress workers all over that they should not attempt ambitious platforms or, when they do, they should leave the erection to trained men who know what they are doing.

The meeting too was almost uncontrollable by the volunteers. The noise continued whilst the addresses were being read, but, in spite of it all, they observed perfect silence when I appealed to them to give me a hearing. I deduced from this fact the conclusion that a little previous preparation as in Bihar would have produced the same results and I would have done much more

substantial work at Ballia than I was able to do. What is wanted is quiet and sustained work. Ballia possesses some very good workers, and it is possible to make it a greater centre of activity. I know that the people of Ballia are patient and long-suffering. Theirs was no mean sacrifice in 1921-22.

KASHI VIDYAPITH

From Ballia we went to Banaras where we had to change for Lucknow on our way to Sitapur. There was a halt of five hours in Banaras. Babu Bhagwan Das took the opportunity of arranging a meeting of students of the Kashi Vidyapith. He took me also to see the good work in spinning and weaving done by the middle schools conducted by the Municipality. Their work, it will be remembered, was started by Prof. Ramdas Gour, and it has been since continued. Both *takli* and the spinning-wheel are at work in the school. The experiment may fairly be claimed to be a success. At the Vidyapith I was shown the workshop. Its growing feature is its carpentry department. The spinning-wheel cannot be claimed to have prospered in the Vidyapith. I had occasion in my speech[1] to say to the students and the professors that, if they had no faith in the spinning-wheel, they should remove it from their curriculum entirely. It was no use giving it a place because it was the fashion to consider it part of national activity. Time had arrived when every national institution worth the name had to evolve its educational policy and to prosecute it even in spite of opposition and indifference.

AT LUCKNOW

From Banaras we went to Lucknow, where there was a halt of over three hours. There the Lucknow Municipality did me the honour of presenting me with an address which was written in choice high-flown Urdu. Special care was taken to make the language as difficult as possible for a simple man like me, not belonging to U.P., to understand. Most difficult Persian and Arabic words were used and it seemed as if every word of Sanskrit origin or word spoken by the crowd was deliberately excluded. Naturally, therefore, I was supplied with an English translation. I, therefore, told the Municipality that it was not possible for me to congratulate it on its high-flown Urdu. I believe in a national language for interprovincial commerce but that language could neither be Lucknavi Urdu nor Sanskritized Hindi. It

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Kashi Vidyapith, Banaras", 17-10-1925.

must be Hindustani, a combination of words generally spoken by the Urdu-knowing and the Hindi-knowing public, a language easily understood by Hindus and Mussalmans alike. The Municipality of Lucknow is essentially a Swarajist municipality. It has a record of work in no way inferior to that of its predecessors. But I told my audience that it would be improper to be satisfied with merely coming to the standard of its predecessors. Congressmen wherever they capture an institution should be able to show a better record, and it was therefore a matter for thought that the Lucknow roads were so bad as they were. If want of funds was the cause, the excuse was inadmissible as Congressmen were expected to take up the spade and the shovel and repair the roads by their voluntary labour. I congratulated the Municipality on its experiments in dairying, but I warned them against being satisfied until they could supply cheap and pure milk to the population within their jurisdiction.

The address of the Municipality was discreetly silent about the Hindu-Muslim question. Speaking, however, amongst friends (most of the councillors, whether Hindus or Mussalmans, were friends whom I knew) I could not ignore the question and therefore spoke upon the growing tension between the two parties. I suggested that whatever happened in other parts of India, Lucknow at least should be able to compose the differences and to achieve a unity unbreakable under any strain and irrespective of what happened in other parts of India.

I had time, too, to pay a flying visit to its Women's College. This is a college conducted by the American Mission, said to be the oldest institution of its kind in all Asia. I saw there girls drawn from almost every part of India. They flocked round me to get my autograph in their autograph books. I have scared away many autograph-mongers by mentioning the condition under which I generally give my autograph, and that is that the applicants should promise to wear khaddar and spin regularly. I mentioned the conditions to the girls. Nothing daunted, they readily made the promise which the lady superintendent has assured me she would see was religiously kept.

In Sitapur

From Lucknow we motored to Sitapur, reaching there about 10 p.m. Before reaching my quarters I had to attend a meeting of the Hindu Sabha to receive its address. In reply to the address, I said that I hardly deserved it because I had done nothing for the Sabha as such; on the contrary, I had even criticized, though

in a perfectly friendly spirit, some of its activities; but I accepted the address as I yielded to no one in my devotion to Hinduism. I said further that all religious activity was of true service only in so far as it adhered to truth and non-violence in their fulness. From the Hindu Sabha meeting, I was taken to a public meeting where there was to be an address of the Municipality. The next day I visited, in company with the Ali Brothers the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan Conference. The Presidential address, admirable in many respects, had scrupulously avoided the use of words of Persian or Arabic origin. In my speech, therefore, I was obliged to reiterate the views I expressed in the reply to the Lucknow Municipality address. Highly artificial and Sanskritized Hindi is as avoidable as highly Persianized Urdu. Both the speeches are unintelligible to the masses. I have accepted Hindustani as a common medium because it is understood by over 20 crores of the people of India. This is not the artificial Lucknavi Urdu or the Sammelani Hindi. And one would expect at least a Sammelan address to be such as would be understood by both Hindus and Mussalmans of the common type. The animal who, if he pronounces the name *Ishwar* dreads to pronounce the name *Khuda*, or the one who would pronounce the name *Khuda* at every turn, but would regard it as sinful to utter the name *Ishwar*, is not an attractive being. I reminded the audience, too, that Hindi propaganda in U.P. could only consist in improving the literature and creating an atmosphere for the advent of a Hindi Rabindranath and that the Sammelan should devote its attention outside U.P. to popularizing Hindustani speech and by publishing standard works of other languages in Devnagari character. Maulana Mahomed Ali emphasized my first point by remarking that if Hindustani speech required an artificial stimulus in the home of its birth the attempt to make it the common medium had better be given up. In the afternoon, there was the conference presided over by Maulana Shaukat Ali. His address, which was a thesis on Hindu-Muslim unity, wound up with an exhortation on charkha and khaddar. I was called upon to follow him and, therefore, took up the theme the Maulana had just introduced. I showed the necessity of the charkha and khaddar and ended with my reasons for helping the Patna decision which, I contended, was not a forced growth, but an exact indication of Congress public opinion. Pandit Motilalji, who followed me, took up the Patna resolution and explained it in detail and, whilst reiterating his own belief in the charkha and khaddar, said that the Congress could not be thoroughly representative of the people unless it became predo-

minantly political. After passing Panditji's resolution confirming the Patna decision and approving the formation of the Spinners' Association, the delegates went to the Gujarati *pandal* to partake of light refreshments that were provided by the Gujarati merchants who were domiciled in Sitapur.

My tour in U.P., if it may be so called, was wound up with a long and hearty discussion with a Hindu Sabha deputation that had come from Lucknow specially to confer with me on the Hindu-Muslim tension in Lucknow. I told them that I had not gone back on my undertaking to arbitrate upon their disputes. I told them that I had offered to hear the evidence last year in Delhi, but I told them that now under the changed conditions, neither party might care to submit the matters in dispute to me. But that, if they did, I would gladly make time even to go to Lucknow and arbitrate. On the deputation telling me that the Hindus would like me to arbitrate, I advised them to approach the Mussalmans and let me know if the responsible men of both the parties were prepared to abide by my award.

Thus ended my tour in Bihar and U.P. At the time of writing these notes I find myself in Cutch where I have Mahadev Desai with me to take up the burden of writing down the notes of the interesting experiences of this weird, secluded land.

Young India, 29-10-1925

220. MUNICIPAL LIFE

The fashion, that seems now to have become permanent, of presenting prominent Congressmen with addresses by municipalities and local boards has resulted in my coming in touch with the working of municipalities almost all over India. I have come to the conclusion from my observation of so many municipalities that the greatest problem they have to tackle is sanitation. I am aware that it is a stupendous problem. Some of the national habits are bad beyond description, and yet so ingrained as to defy all human effort. Wherever I go this insanitation obtrudes itself upon my gaze in some shape or another. In the Punjab and Sind, in total disregard of the elementary laws of health we dirty our terraces and roofs breeding billions of disease-producing microbes and founding colonies of flies. Down south, we do not hesitate to dirty our streets, and early in the morning, it is impossible for anyone in whom the sense of decency is developed to walk through the streets which are lined with people performing func-

tions of nature which are meant to be performed in seclusion and in spots which human beings need not ordinarily tread. In Bengal, the same tale in a varying form has to be told; the same pool in which people have washed their dirt, their pots, and in which cattle have drunk, supplies drinking water. And here in Cutch men and women think nothing of repeating the performance I have seen in Madras. These are not ignorant people; they are not illiterate; many have travelled even beyond the borders of India. They ought to know better; but they do not. And nobody worries about giving them an education in the elements of sanitation. It is, or should be, one of the privileges of municipalities and local boards to make it their chief concern to eradicate insanitation within their limits. If we are to live in cities, if we are to live an organized life, if we are to grow in health and wisdom,—we shall have to get rid of insanitation some day or other. The sooner we do so the better. Let us not postpone everything till swaraj is attained. Some things no doubt will only be done when that much-wished-for event has happened. But it will never happen if we do not do the many things which can be done today as easily as under swaraj, and which are signs of corporate and civilized national life. No institution can handle this problem better and more speedily than our municipalities. They have, so far as I am aware, all the powers they need in this direction and they can get more, if necessary. Only the will is often wanting. It is not recognized that a municipality does not deserve to exist which does not possess model closets and where streets and lanes are not scrupulously clean all the hours of the day and the night. But the reform cannot be brought about without infinite application on the part of members of municipalities and local boards. To think of all the municipalities in the aggregate and to wait till everyone has begun the work is indefinitely to postpone the reform. Let those who have got the will and the ability commence the reform in right earnest now, and the rest will follow.

It is with this end in view that I reproduce[1] elsewhere a translation of a humorously written letter by Dr. Hariprasad Desai of Ahmedabad and published recently in *Navajivan*. The Municipality of Ahmedabad had taken up the problem seriously. Ahmedabad is an exceptionally difficult town to deal with from the sanitary standpoint. It is unclean. I have not seen a more unclean

[1] Not reproduced here. For purport of the letter *vide* "Sanitation in Ahmedabad", 5-11-1925.

city. Its *pols* are seething with stench and dirt. The superstitions and prejudices to be overcome are immense. Insanitation has acquired an almost religious sanction. Even the doctrine of ahimsa is invoked in favour of dirty habits! I invite the reader to carefully peruse the translation. He will then appreciate the difficulties that face the reformer in Ahmedabad. Not many volunteers are to be had for this thankless and difficult work. The reader will note too that it is being done by the commissioners who are interested in making Ahmedabad a model city in point of sanitation. They are doing their work outside office hours and partly as a labour of love. No municipality need expect any brilliant result if it is to be satisfied with mere routine work, issuing instructions to its executive officer. Every municipal commissioner will have to become a self-constituted scavenger in the city under his care if the cities of India are to become fit to live in for the poorest people in a decent sanitary condition.

Young India, 29-10-1925

221. TELEGRAM TO RANCHHODDAS PATWARI

KUTCH MANDVI,
October 30, 1925

TO
DIWAN SAHEB MORVI

SURPRISED OFFICIAL REPLY PURELY PERSONAL LETTER[1] NO DESIRE PASS THROUGH MORVI IF I MAY NOT HOLD MEETING OF SMALL WORKING COMMITTEE WHICH HAS FROM ITS INCEPTION SCRUPULOUSLY AVOIDED REFERENCE PURE POLITICS OR . . .[2] KATHIAWAR STATES.

GANDHI

From a photostat of the original: G.N. 4121

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Ranchhoddas Patwari", 22-10-1925.
[2] One word is illegible.

222. SPEECH AT MANDVI[1]

October 31, 1925

Who acts courageously and for what purpose? One could be courageous in order to be licentious, one could be courageous for the sake of a woman and, even for the sake of wealth. However, all this is like being courageous in order to jump into a well. Courage should be shown for the purpose of swimming across to the other shore. The supreme effort should be made for the sake of self-realization. We should take up a profession in which we offend no one and in which not a single pie has to be borrowed from anyone. Gentlemen with whom I was very familiar and who were like the multi-millionaires with whom I conversed the other day have been reduced to the sort of penury described in the couplet[2]. "I saw the relations of Shah Alam[3] begging in the streets." Hence, why should there be all this rush, pretence and fuss about something that is of a fleeting nature? Courage should be shown in having a vision of the glory of God and in singing His praises. True courage consists in losing one's mind in looking around at God's creations. These countless stars which shine in the sky, whose is the lustre they shed? One may spend many lives in trying to solve this riddle. Shrimad Rajchandra[4] lay in insufferable agony before his death; however, he was not aware of it, he only eagerly awaited the vision of God. Today, I have to say harsh things gently; hence I feel I am lucky in being able to recall to memory a man like Shrimad Rajchandra and to praise his non-violence. Let us today derive from the memory of this man the strength to speak out without fear the plain, milk-white truth as seen by the soul. Let us stand in awe of the Self alone; let us be concerned that the Self, which is ever watchful, does not suffer pain. Let us learn endless penance from Rajchandra's life and realize that at the end of such penance, he came to worship *Chaitanya*[5]. Let us make our lives meaningful by realizing our insignificance and thus become

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of Gandhiji's tour

[2] By Behramji Malbari, a Parsi poet of Gujarat

[3] One of the last Mogul emperors

[4] Business man and jeweller; had profound influence on Gandhiji's religious development.

[5] Universal Consciousness

meek as a lamb and strong as a lion by contemplating the *Chaitanya* that is within us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-11-1925

223. SCHEME FOR COW-PROTECTION

The work of cow-protection has been going on at a snail's pace. I can assure the *gosevaks*[1] that the movement does not come to a standstill even for a single moment. I keep all the time thinking of it and also discuss it. And, as there are many people in Kutch who wish to serve this cause and also because it does not seem likely that I shall be able to come to Kutch again, I have explained my scheme and collected some funds. As I write this, Rs. 3,000 has been collected and I hope to collect some more too.

Some friends have asked for the facts and figures of the cow-protection scheme. Here they are:

1. We are responsible for the sin involved in the export of the hides of dead cattle, while we use the hides of animals that are slaughtered. In order to prevent this, we should start tanneries and look upon it as our dharma to do so. I have no doubt whatsoever that this should become a part of our movement for cow-protection. This work can begin with the establishment of a tannery. Rs. 1,25,000 may be required today for this work. No loss can be incurred in this in the long run. As there is no question of making a profit, there is no fear of competition.

2. People should be trained for this work as it calls for considerable study. Scholarships should be offered to deserving trainees. I would put Rs. 5,000 as the expense under this head.

3. The Association[2] needs a library. This must contain books on cattle-breeding, on plants for purifying milk and on leather. A sum of about Rs. 3,000 may be required for this.

4. I consider a sum of Rs. 10,000 as necessary for a preliminary investigation of the dairy scheme, that is, for engaging a dairy scientist, to make out a report, getting a survey made of particular city in the light of this idea and for covering such other preliminary expenses.

[1] Workers who serve the cow

[2] The All-India Cow-Protection Association established in April 1925

According to this plan it is intended to spend Rs. 1,43,000 a year in this way. Under it the expenses on the tannery are by way of capital investment. That would amount to Rs. 1,30,000. The other preliminary expenses cover training and investigation.

The recurring expenses of the Association are not included here, as I would regard the Association as a failure if the expenses are not met by ordinary subscriptions. A secretary has already been appointed. I have chosen Shri Valji Govindji Desai for this post. He was a professor, first in the Gujarat College and later on in the Hindu University. It has been decided that he should be paid a salary of Rs. 200. Besides this, he has to be provided housing. At present he pays no rent as he lives in the Ashram, but he may hereafter have to be paid a sum of Rs. 25 towards rent. No other expenses have been incurred for the office so far. Other persons will also have to be engaged. However, we shall have an idea of what to do in this respect as the membership increases. It is my confirmed belief that a sum of Rs. 1,48,000 should be spent under any circumstances, as I regard cow-protection as an impossible task unless we run a tannery and a dairy as part of our dharma.

I hope that those who wish to serve this noble cause will contribute towards it.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 1-11-1925

224. SOME COMPLAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS

I have before me a very long letter containing complaints and suggestions. I feel it is necessary to publish it as it is from a volunteer. Omitting nothing important, I give below a summary of it.[1]

I do not believe that spinning-wheels cannot function in Gujarat. The farmers of Gujarat do have some spare time, although they may not have as much as farmers elsewhere. It is our duty to cure them of their idleness and make them work at some virtuous industry; but we have not yet firmly established ourselves in the villages. And yet I know that the present trend, at any rate, is in this direction. No doubt, this programme will take some time. The spinning-wheel will not disappear so lo as even one individual like myself is steadfast in his belief and ke s on working accord-

[1] Not translated here

ing to his own capacity. Whatever be the number of the activities circling round the spinning-wheel, the wheel is the corner-stone, the hub, the centre.

I am prepared to believe that some unnecessary expenses were incurred in Gujarat; this, however, could not be avoided. All of us were beginners, novices in this new field. We did not have the benefit of anyone's previous experience in this matter. The other provinces had the experience of Gujarat before them; is it not sufficient that the organizers were honest and prepared to make sacrifices? If all the Gujaratis with whom we had to deal had been capable and honest, we would not have suffered the loss of a single pie or would have suffered only that loss which we incurred with open eyes.

Had the allegations against the ashrams been specific and detailed, we would have investigated them. Why is it that the correspondent makes no mention of the Satyagraha Ashram? More than a lakh of rupees have been spent in it alone. Its accounts have been maintained down to the minutest detail. I do not know of any unnecessary expenses being incurred by the ashrams with which either the provincial committee or I am associated. I knew of some expenses having been incurred without full deliberation; however, so long as we are unable to get fully competent workers, we shall find that such expenses continue to be incurred. If I was to lay the foundation of the Satyagraha Ashram today, I would organize it differently in the light of my experience to date. However, I have no regret whatsoever, as regards what has already been done. What can a man give, over and above his all? The same rule should be applied while judging all institutions. Have the organizers guarded these, regarding them as their own? Have they, at the same time, regarded them as belonging to someone else and maintained accounts down to the very last pie, knowing that others are there to examine these? And, do the organizers have the ordinary capacity to carry out their duties? And institutions with regard to which these questions can be satisfactorily answered are above criticism.

The correspondent has alleged that I have not taken Dr. Sumant's suggestion seriously. He does not know that I have esteemed Dr. Sumant ever since I came to know him in 1915. His spirit of sacrifice has always drawn me towards him. And by nature I am inclined to regard even a child's suggestion seriously; how could I then laugh at Dr. Sumant's suggestion? And why should one whose whole being is moved only by the desire to serve dismiss lightly any suggestion whatsoever?

May I expose here the subtle praise implied in this allegation against me? The correspondent suggests that I perceive everything instantaneously. I must admit that I have no such power. On the contrary, I know that I understand certain things only after a great deal of effort. It may be that I have failed to understand Dr. Sumant's suggestion. I know this that I have never in my life shut my mind to a single suggestion.

Then again, the correspondent advises me to establish a society of servants like the one founded by Gokhale. What I have already said covers this too. The Satyagraha Ashram is a society of servants. Such as it is, it is a measure of my capacity. In it I have made and am still making full use of my intelligence. I have been well aware of its defects. I realize and admit that its shortcomings are a reflection of my shortcomings. If, on weighing the merits of this Ashram against its drawbacks, it is found wanting, the world has a right and duty to say that I have lived my life in vain as I have attempted to put my whole soul into it. No one stands in my way there; the men and women there live their lives in accordance with my wishes. They live there because I have called or chosen them. I confess in all humility that it is not within my power to build anything better.

Now where and how should I set up another society of servants? And anything I set up would be an image or a branch of this Ashram.

Vallabhbhai and I had thought of founding another institution, call it big or small. Funds would be available, if we established it. However, we could come to no decision and have allowed things to go on.

I am also firmly convinced that the Satyagraha Ashram is not all-comprehensive. It does not claim to do everything or to satisfy everyone. There is room for many institutions to suit temperaments which differ from mine; but then I cannot be their founder. This task has to be done by others. Even in these I would serve if I could, but I cannot assume responsibility for them. To do so would be false attachment. There are limits to my capacity and I would simply die if I crossed these.

In my opinion, the triple programme[1] suggested by the correspondent is already being implemented. It has not yet yielded much result because enough workers have not been trained so

[1] Mass contact with villagers, training for social service and propagation of khadi

far. All will be well if all workers—men and women—steadfastly engage themselves, each in the task assigned to him or her.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-11-1925

225. SPEECH AT MUNDRA[1]

November 1, 1925

The problem of Kutch has, it is true, shaken the whole of India; however, at no place have I had the occasion to use this form of address as at no other place has the problem assumed such proportions as it has here. The storm broke at Bhuj. As soon as the report reached the people of Mundra, they sent a telegram to the secretary of the reception committee enquiring whether the latter was indulging in any undesirable mixing of persons? Such allegations can only be made at places where the people are steeped in superstition and make a mountain out of a molehill. When the dispute first arose in Bhuj, I had congratulated the people on having solved it in a simple way. However, after this episode my heart has not readily agreed to congratulate people at other places. What took place at Bhuj was not deliberately done. However, no congratulations can be offered on a situation which, once created unconsciously, is made a permanent feature in course of time; for this only sorrow can be expressed. I have to speak exactly as I feel, before the ruler and the people. This is because I am responsible to Him who keeps a strict account of every moment of mine. Hence, I have to tell you too what your conduct was and is like. The telegram that you had sent broke the bounds of propriety. I dictated the reply that no one committed the fault of any undesirable mingling of people and only those who regarded untouchability as a sin would be seated along with the *Antyajas*. However, it is wrong to invite me to a place where the entire public believes in untouchability. It is an insult to invite me to a place where the untouchables are treated with nothing but contempt. After having come here, I heard of the school for the untouchables. I felt that at such a place the *Antyajas* would receive service. I would congratulate Ibrahim Pradhan Saheb on the school but the Hindu public deserves no

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of the Kutch tour; Gandhiji commenced the speech by addressing the audience as "*Antyaja* brothers and sisters, their sympathizers, and other Hindu brothers and sisters".

such congratulations. Its existence puts the Hindus to shame. It is a matter of shame for me if a Muslim builds a Siva temple for my benefit. I was pleased to see the school's activity of spinning and weaving; however, I immediately felt that neither I nor the Hindus could take credit for this meritorious deed. I can have no sense of satisfaction if a Muslim recites the *Gayatri mantra* instead of me. I can only feel satisfied when a Brahmin comes along and offers to recite the *Gayatri* for me. However, in this case, the Khojas are doing the work that should be done by Hindus. Here, no one is bothered in the least about the *Antyajas*. I do not see any non-*Antyajas* except the guests sitting among the *Antyajas* here before me. Even those who go around with me during the day have abandoned them and are seated in the enclosure for high-caste gentlemen. If you could rip open my heart today, you would find it crying—O Lord! Could this be the Hindu dharma, where no one cares for the *Antyajas*? Is there not a single person in the town who will come to their rescue?

VARIOUS DIFFERENCES OF OPINION

Everywhere there are differences of opinion. But there should be some limit to these. I should not be invited to a place where these differences are so wide that there is no common meeting ground at all. The Ali Brothers and I, who are such close associates, do not enter into discussions about religion. How can I explain my dharma of non-violence to them? Only through my conduct can I show them what my religion consists in. I would be transgressing the limits if I went beyond this; and then they too might do likewise. At heart they may feel that I should become a Muslim, but they have never actually asked me to become a Muslim and to read the *Kalama*. How could I entrust my daughter to them if they said so? I cannot insult anyone's religion by asking him to give it up. Maulana Shaukat Ali is a hefty person. It is difficult for him even to bend down to say his *namaz*. Nevertheless, while travelling, he somehow manages to sit on the wooden seat and say his *namaz* and thereby shows me what his dharma is. I too would show my dharma through conduct alone. Let us learn to do so and let our relationship remain cordial. However, you cannot show your dharma by inviting me in this manner. Your dharma is distinct from mine. Even though we do not agree, let us bear love towards one another. What separates us is not a gulf but an ocean. Hence it is better that you should come over to Sabarmati to hear my views rather than call me here to receive such a welcome. I should

be invited only by those persons who love to serve the *Antyajas* and who wish to know more about them. But those, who cannot sit beside the untouchables even for a moment, why should they invite me? When I think of the dharma that you practise today I feel in my heart of hearts that it had better perish. Just as during the Boer War one Englishman prayed for his country's defeat, just as Bhishma, while helping the Kauravas, gave his blessings to the Pandavas, just as Lord Krishna's blessings went to the latter alone, similarly my prayer to God is that if this is Hinduism, may it perish. I told my wife that if my dharma were distinct from hers, it was only proper that we should live in separate huts; but she should not insist on my sending away Lakshmi and I, on my part, should not insist on her having Lakshmi with her. If all of you felt polluted at the touch of *Antyajas*, it was your dharma to read my writings, to get acquainted with my views and thus have a look at me from a distance. I am a slave of India and can stand all alone in following my dharma and practising it. Though the whole world should side with me, I could not bear to live if I had to give it up. Hence, it was your dharma to tell me, without any reservations: "You need not come here; let them regard you as a Mahatma in America." What good is it your describing me as one whose praises are sung by the whole world? It is the satyagraha in me that alone deserves praise. This term does not mean revolt against the British, but it means an increasing awareness of dharma, an awareness which first came to me in 1887 and which continues to this very day. In that year my caste had threatened to excommunicate me in case I went to England. I replied that it was welcome to do so, but I would certainly go to England. My satyagraha was born on that day. The satyagraha with the Government is only a part of my satyagraha; my first satyagraha was directed against the *mahajan* which I regarded as my father. It could be that you called me here so that I can explain this satyagraha. You can have me in your midst only if satyagraha and my love of the *Antyajas* and of khadi that go with it, things which make up my being, are dear to you.

If they [the *Antyajas*] steal needles, we steal anvils and give nothing in return. From where have you earned your lakhs? Kutchis in Kharagpur, Calcutta, Zanzibar, South Africa and other places have given me large sums of money, but they made no conditions! Yet, having come to Kutch today, I have to hear such harsh words and that too from millionaires! If an *Antyaja* gives me the money earned by him he can ask me

to use it in Kutch alone. Poor people, however, have uttered not a word of any such condition. You mention the Rs. 500 that you had sent to poor Gokuldas and then add the other five hundred to it. Why do you not say, instead, that you would give me nothing? I do not like a Bania-like attitude. Having been born in that caste, I knew its ways and gave them up. Having been brought up in Kathiawar I was familiar with intrigues and gave up these too. Today, I fearlessly ask everyone, whether he be a millionaire or an emperor or a poor man, not to play the Bania with me, not to try to outwit me, not to be clever, but to be straightforward in their dealings with me.

For my part, I wish to learn the tanner's trade in order to afford protection to cows.[1] If a teacher wishes you to give up your trade in order to study, ask him to teach me that trade first and then talk of studying. We are now entering an era in which not the *Antyajas* only but every Hindu will have to learn the tanner's trade for the sake of cow-protection. There is nothing demeaning or shameful about a profession. Have I not cleaned lavatories? I have done so for many persons like you and it is because I have done so that I allow a Nagar Brahmin like Daulatram to clean mine. Otherwise, who am I as compared to him, a Brahmin? I should be doing for him what I allow him to do for me and I am not ashamed, as I have not been ashamed, to do the same dirty work for many like you, and would not be ashamed to do so even today. There is no disgrace in doing so; on the contrary, it amounts to great service. A mother becomes worthy of being remembered every morning only because she cleans our filth. Why should we not regard a *Bhangi* in the same way?

Having come here today I have an idea of the parsimony and callousness of the people of Kutch. Although you recite the verses of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Gayatri mantra* and the *Navakar mantra*[2] —there is no place in your hearts for the *Antyajas*. The dharma that you practise is neither Hindu dharma nor Jain dharma. He who is prepared to protect the bed-bug, should he not protect the *Antyajas* who are as meek as cows? You must learn something at least. What you ought to learn from me is not strength to fight but love. The former is only a small part of my life and,

[1] Gandhiji said this with reference to the statement made by one of the pupils of the *Antyaja* school, "I shall not handle leather any more; I wish to study now."

[2] A Jain prayer

even that is born of my love for truth, my compassion, my love. Without this last, my whole struggle and my persistence in it would be futile. Only he who puts this love into practice in his own life can get the blessings of the *Antyajas* and the cows. Open your eyes and the curtains that cover your hearts! Take some warning at any rate! May God bless you!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-11-1925

226. REMINISCENCES OF KUTCH [*-I*]

November 2, 1925

Mountain of Hope

Before boarding the steamer for Kutch, I had uttered unawares the words that I did not know why I was going there. Now that only a day remains of this seemingly long tour,[1] I again wonder why I came here. Whenever I went to any place, I knew what I had to do there and what to expect of it. Regarding Kutch, I had no idea at all. I set out, yielding simply to the persistent request of some Kutch gentlemen and their love for me. I have deliberately said "some", as I found after coming here that there were people who went so far as to say that they had not been consulted before I was invited to Kutch and that they were finally forced to agree. I had built a mountain of hope without any foundations; hence it seems to me that I find here nothing but despair everywhere. However, there is no despair for a sailor who has the *Gita* for his beacon, without which he would always be despondent. Because I had raised such a castle of hopes this time, the singer of the *Gita* tells me with a smile on his lips and tears in his eyes: "Why did you make this mistake? Pay for it now. Because you had hopes you now taste the bitterness of disappointment. You have known that if you start out with despair, the end is always sweet. Never again make this mistake. Despair too is a figment of the mind; one who is vigilant need not suffer it as expectation finds no harbour in his mind."

This was the philosophical way of looking at the matter. It is good for the soul. Now, let us look at the historical aspect.

[1] Gandhiji's Kutch tour began on October 22 and ended on November 3.

ROADS IN KUTCH

The trip was undertaken in the following order: Mandvi, Bhuj, Kotda, Kothara, Veenjhan, Naranpur, Dumrao, Goghra, Mandvi, Khakhar, Bhujpar, Mundra, Kero, Bhuj, Kokva, Anjar and Tuni. I am writing this at Mundra. I shall complete it in Bhuj and, it will be posted before I reach Anjar.

The twenty-four hours of the calm voyage[1] passed off like a moment. At the Mandvi port at first there was the launch, then the *machhva*[2], then the *tari*[3], after that the chariot, then the horse-drawn carriage—such was the chaotic arrangement. The chariot had to wade through water. I call it chaotic as the arrangement was governed by no rules. The crowd caused confusion and it was with difficulty that we could change from one mode of transportation to another. I saw a dilapidated dock here, but it is not in use. We shall consider later why the traveller has to put up with so many inconveniences.

We reached Mandvi on 22nd October. Today is November 2. During this length of time, I could visit many more places and travel much greater distances, in other parts of India. None of the above mentioned towns is more than 60 miles from Bhuj. There are only a few motorable roads in Kutch—three or four. Railway lines are even fewer. A line goes from Bhuj to the port of Tuni or that of Khari. Hence, one can go only by car from Mandvi to Bhuj, from Bhuj to Kotda and from Mundra to Bhuj. The rest of the journey was covered by bullock-carts and that at great risk. At every place there were unlimited quantities of sand and dust. I have used the word bullock-cart for *chadiko*. The latter means a small *ekka* drawn by a bullock, in which only one person can sit comfortably and no one can sleep. Even the journey by car on the first day almost killed me. I developed a little temperature too. The reception committee, therefore, made arrangements to enable me to lie down in the car or the bullock-cart. They obtained a large *chadiko* or chariot for me. As it had four wheels, a mattress could be spread in it and it also gave one fewer jolts. Despite this, because the road from Kotda to Kothara was terribly bad, I was taken part of the way in a palanquin. The idea of being carried in a palanquin has never appealed to me but here the alternatives before me were either to leave Kothara or

[1] Gandhiji left Bombay for Kutch by a steamer on October 21, 1925, and reached Mandvi port in Kutch at 11 a.m. the next day.

[2] A small boat propelled by oars

[3] A raft

to run the risk of falling ill or to ride in a palanquin; and of these alternatives even the reception committee would not permit the risk of my falling ill. I, therefore, chose the alternative of riding in a palanquin. I may here confess that I had been offered a great temptation by Kothara. There were many good workers there, I had been told, that I could collect large sums of money, that I would get there an idea of the famine conditions in Kutch, etc., etc. Hence I fell for the palanquin. The palanquin-bearers seemed to be favoured by the State. They kept bullying the poor volunteers all the way and, if these latter put in a word, they got enraged and talked back sharply. Throughout the journey, they kept grumbling and complaining. I found it very painful to be carried by such persons. I wanted to walk, but how could I do so? That would create a false impression; hence just as a corpse being carried makes no comments, I too lay quiet without opening my mouth. I shall think many times before riding in a palanquin again.

Among the many wrong notions current about me is one that I totally disapprove of railways, motor-cars, etc. One gentleman asked me in all seriousness whether I preferred tarred roads or cutcha ones like those in Kutch? I shall take this opportunity to remove this false notion. I believe that railways or motor-cars are not essential for human civilization. This is an ideal. However, the railways have come to stay in India today. Hence, I would not foolishly try to prevent one particular city from being served by railways when these and motor-cars are there all over the country. If there are ships going up to Mandvi, far from opposing I would welcome a railway line running from Mandvi to Bhuj. The same is true of motor-cars. I am for all roads being tarred. Both these means of transport help speed. There is no question of dharma here. In fact, tarred roads enable us to practise our dharma. How much suffering do uneven roads cause to animals? I also look forward to improvements in bullock-carts as well as the roads meant for these. Good roads are the mark of a well-organized government. It is the duty of both the ruler and the subjects to build good roads. Good roads are recognized as absolutely necessary for motor-cars, so why not for animals too? Is it because they are dumb? If the ruler does not go in for good roads, why cannot the wealthy class do so? Building good roads should be easy in Kutch, as the distances are short. This is a difficult venture for the people to undertake; but it is not impossible. In the first instance, the people should place this request before the ruler.

The Problem of Untouchability

Nowhere else have I experienced such difficulties raised by the problem of untouchability as in Kutch. One reason may be that I found a great deal of awakening among the *Antyajas* of Kutch. At every place, large crowds of them attended the public meetings. The volunteers also encouraged them to do so. The reception committee, on the other hand, adopted the policy of keeping everyone pleased. At every place, therefore, a section of the public was found opposing the idea of seating the *Antyajas* along with others at public meetings. I came across the difficulty first in Bhuj, but I satisfied myself that it was very well there. I found, however, that what was accomplished there was misinterpreted elsewhere. What seemed proper in Bhuj took such a form at other places that it appeared to be thoroughly discourteous and cruel. At every place, factions arose and in the end it looked as if the entire reception committee considered untouchability a dharma, with the result that my companions and I were regarded as untouchables. Wherever we went we had strange, tragic and ludicrous experiences. They were ludicrous because no one was deliberately impolite. At some places my speeches were misinterpreted, while at other places people were discourteous without meaning it.

I do not wish to describe at length my experiences at every place. This has been done in the vivid narrative of Mahadev Desai. I only wish to give an idea of the over-all impression they left on my mind. And that too in order to show that whoever believes that untouchability is widely prevalent in Kutch is mistaken. If the leaders of the reception committee had shown no weakness and if what I had brought about in Bhuj had not been misunderstood elsewhere, the people of Kutch would not have exposed themselves to ridicule. In Kutch, there are separate localities for untouchables even in cities. This I saw in fact in Mundra and also in Anjar. In Mandvi, there is a children's home founded by a *Bhatia*[1] gentleman and beside it is the locality for the *Antyajas*. I found the *Antyajas* even there to be more fearless than their counterparts in Kathiawar. Perhaps they are also more intelligent. Many of them are weavers by trade. An *Antyaja* family in Bhujpar is doing business in cotton yarn. Nowhere else have I found as many untouchables attending public meetings as in Kutch. I used to ask them questions at the meetings. And the answers they gave were thoughtful and fearless.

[1] A Hindu community in Gujarat

They told—with explanation—the tales of their sufferings as well. In Mandvi, twenty-five of the *Antyaja* families—that is a hundred persons—took a pledge that they would give up eating meat and drinking liquor and would wear khadi. In Anjar, at a large meeting, many *Antyajas* took the pledge not to eat carrion and not to drink liquor. It also seemed to me that in Kutch there is less of drinking among this section of the people. Moreover, it seems that among the ordinary people here there is a total absence of the belief that one is polluted by the touch of the *Antyajas*. Only the so-called higher castes—the Brahmins, Banias, *Bhatias*, *Luhanas* and so on—make a show of this belief. I say "show" because many who took their seats in the enclosure meant for those who believed in this did so out of fear. Many of them told me themselves that they did not believe in untouchability, but could not say so publicly for fear of being excommunicated from their castes. No one was "polluted" because of the *Antyajas* joining in the processions and, wherever I visited the *Antyaja* localities, many of the high-caste Hindus accompanied me. If the reception committee had courageously declared that the meetings were open to all, I am sure that almost as many persons would have attended them as did in fact attend. Certain wealthy people might not have come. At many places I found many youths belonging to the higher castes serving the *Antyajas* without fear. Hence, despite my painful experiences with regard to *Antyajas* in Kutch, I have come to the conclusion that untouchability has lost its hold there. Some bigoted people are still clinging to it, but I think they are wasting effort.

I had my bitterest experience in Mundra. I found only hypocrisy, insincerity and play-acting there. Even Muslims were made to sit in the enclosure for those who supported untouchability as if they too believed in it. Hence, only my companions and the Muslim volunteers remained in the section reserved for *Antyajas*. Many among the Hindu volunteers, though they claimed that they did not believe in untouchability at all, were nevertheless kept in the enclosure meant for those who did believe in it.

There is a school for the *Antyajas* in Mundra but it is a philanthropic Muslim gentleman, Sheth Ibrahim Pradhan, who runs it at his own expense.

The school may be regarded as good up to a point. The children are kept very clean. The building is in the centre of the city. The children had even been taught Sanskrit verses, [which they recited] in a broken accent. Spinning, carding,

ginning and weaving were taught in the school itself. Only children's clothes were not made of khadi; however, the organizers had gone in for the cloth believing it to be pure khadi. The reader might perhaps conclude that this school would give me some satisfaction. It gave me no satisfaction but caused me grief, rather, as the credit for it would not go to a Hindu. I have already mentioned the name of the gentleman who finances it. The gentleman in charge of this school is the heir of the Aga Khan in Mundra. Sheth Ibrahim Pradhan deserves all praise for his charity, as I was informed that this school is not being run for the purpose of converting the untouchables or schoolchildren to Islam, but in order to enable them to make progress as Hindus. The people of Mundra also informed me that the gentleman in charge, Mauledina Meghji was a *vedantin* and a learned person. All this must be regarded as satisfactory. However, what is the contribution of the Hindus? Untouchability is an ugly blot on the Hindu religion, it is a sin. The Hindus alone can do *prayaschitta*[1] for it. The dirt on my body will go only when I myself remove it. This institution adds to the prestige of Sheth Ibrahim Pradhan and to that extent to the shame of the Hindus.

However, just as I was destined to come across such unfortunate incidents, I also came across happy ones. The readers of *Navajivan* are familiar with Shri Jivram Kalyanji's name. He has made the service of the *Antyajas* his dharma. His greatest virtue is not so much his philanthropy as his insistence on doing service himself. He gives his wealth and his time to the cause of khadi and the untouchables. In Mandvi, Shri Gokuldas Khimji too is fearlessly serving the *Antyajas*. He is running a school for them at his own expense, and because in several places I came across such workers, I see on the whole no reason for despair in Kutch in regard to this problem of untouchability. The show which brought disgrace to meetings I regard as a temporary phenomenon. Work of a permanent nature is already being done and I have no doubt that it will go on.

The *Antyajas*, however, have not a little suffering inflicted upon them by the State. There is a law regarding the *Antyajas* which has been described by some as a monopoly for [punishing] licentious conduct. On the basis of this law, the *Antyajas* are punished for such conduct. A monopoly is given with regard to this crime, that is, to the person who pays the largest sum the State gives in return the sole authority to catch

[1] Atonement for sins

such offenders, and to collect from them the fines imposed for such crimes. The one who has this monopoly sees to it therefore that the maximum number of such crimes are committed. In other words, the former makes a living by encouraging such conduct or by making false allegations to this effect. This leads to harassment of the *Antyajas*.

Another hardship is inflicted on the weavers. So long as they have not repaid the debts they owe to the money-lender they cannot weave for others. Because of this, they have become the slaves of one or two individuals. They have to accept the payment that these latter give them and have to keep weaving for them. The creditor may charge any rate of interest that he likes, pay for the cloth any price that he chooses. The *Antyajas*, therefore, cannot escape from their clutches. Because of this difficulty, some persons have been even forced to give up their profession. There are thousands of *Antyaja* weavers in Kutch and, but for this cruel practice, they would have had no difficulty in earning their living. The Ruler of Kutch will, I hope, relieve these miserable people from both these hardships of which I have spoken to him. (*To be continued*)[1]

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 15-11-1925

227. SPEECH AT ANJAR[1]

November 2, 1925

This is the last meeting in my Kutch tour. Two or three items in the programme are still left over; nevertheless, so far as

[1] Mahadev Desai has provided in his "Notes" the background to this meeting of orthodox Hindus. It reveals the sort of difficulties Gandhiji was beginning to encounter in his anti-untouchability work. The extract reproduced here also throws light on his own approach to the problem:

He [Gandhiji] suggested to the orthodox President who was also our host to drop the meeting and the address, and to have instead a general meeting in the untouchables' quarter, and then, if necessary, a conference with the orthodox next day. "But we have already made these arrangements. Is it not natural that we may not accept some of your views? We must do honour to you and you should not deprive us of the privilege of listening to your advice," he argued. "But," said Gandhiji, "what is the meaning of honouring me when you do not accept the thing nearest my heart, when you insult those that I hold dearer to me than life itself? And there should be some propriety, some decorum observed. I have addressed meetings of Europeans who share none of my views. But they know their business better. They

meetings are concerned this is the last one. I now do not wish to repeat the things which I have said in many different ways at various meetings. You have come to know my views from many sources and by various channels, and there is no need to reiterate them.

---

make no secret of the fact that I would not be spared at the meeting, and yet they know how to receive and honour their guest. At Calcutta they had a strictly vegetarian lunch entirely out of regard for me. But here? You seize a temporary arrangement suggested by me at Bhuj, and turn and twist it to your advantage, and do not hesitate to reduce it to an absurdity as at Mundra. How would it look if I tell my boy that he is at liberty to abuse me if he likes, and he makes it a point to abuse me to his heart's content every morning? That is what you have done. The President, I suggested at the first day's meeting at Mandvi, could have dropped the address into my hands from a distance, and the next day's President lost no time in benefiting by the suggestion? Is that the way you want to honour me?"

"No," persisted the President, "but, sir, you must go on repeating your views so that they may catch root some day."

"I am not going to emulate the preachers who go on delivering their sermons day in and day out before unwilling audiences. If you want to know and understand my views, you had better come to Sabarmati. At the little place Bhujpar whence we are coming, the organizers saw that no reception could be given me on my terms, and they accordingly dropped the reception and the address, and held the meeting in the untouchables' quarter. It was honest and courageous of them. I beseech you not to indulge in these unreal demonstrations. I want you not even to entertain me and my party. I shall be content to be the guest of the untouchables and find my soul's delight in their frugal but genuine hospitality," said Gandhiji arguing at length.

"But", urged the redoubtable President, "we have made all arrangements. The Reception Committee is very anxious to present the address. I appreciate what you say, but we did all this, not knowing you."

"How can you? I shall be known only after I am dead."

If the orthodox meeting could be had first, and the untouchables' thereafter, the President would probably have been satisfied. But what Gandhiji had suggested was humiliating! Gandhiji then asked him to call a meeting of the Reception Committee, place his proposal before them, and take their decision. "But mind you," said he, "no middle course. Either accept my proposal *in toto* or go through the programme as you have arranged."

The Committee met for about two hours and decided upon an elaborate plan of enclosures and the platform, the President to speak from a distance, eight members of the Committee to sit amongst the untouchables, and the Seth of the town to hand the address to Gandhiji—and not to drop it as at Mandvi, but of course to have a purificatory bath on going home! There was no room for argument now. "So you do not want to conform to my wishes. You want me to conform to yours," Gandhiji asked. "Yes, sir. That is the desire of the Committee," said the President. Gandhiji cheerfully accepted the defeat, went to the meeting and received the address.

I would say only this that in Kutch, as in the rest of India, I have experienced everywhere a feeling of love, and nothing but love, towards myself. In Kutch, I have received more service than I need for myself. At every place, men and women have taken great pains to make me feel happy and have done all they could to fulfil my personal needs. However, you should realize that I did not come to Kutch in order to be personally served. I do not tour around India for this purpose. On the contrary, the more attentively I am served and the more comforts I am provided with, the greater is the actual burden that I have to bear and the debt that I come to owe. Hence the way to spare me is to fulfil only those needs of mine which I specify. I feel irritated if provided with a larger number of volunteers and carriages than I actually require. Kutch has left nothing undone so far as serving me is concerned; Kutch is second to none in this respect.

However, this has no meaning for me. I hunger and thirst after something quite different. God provides a tiny particle of food to the ant and heaps of it to the elephant and He will continue to do so. Hence, there is nothing special in satisfying one's hunger or fulfilling one's daily needs; this is something common to beast as well as man. Perhaps, we do not experience the same feeling of pleasure after eating dainty dishes that an ant has after obtaining a small particle of food.

Hence, after accepting your boundless love, I will only ask you not to crush me under its weight. I do not wish to speak today of the kind of love that would please me. If I do speak about it, you would be pained even though you would listen to my speech. I will not, however, do so.

All the scriptures of the world say that one remembers God when one encounters misery. Draupadi cried out to Krishna and got his help when her husbands were unable to help her. Sitaji derived consolation by merely repeating the name of Rama when she was alone in the Ashoka grove. My friends who were in prison with me also tried to forget their own troubles and derived consolation by repeating the name of God.

There was a well-educated, simple-hearted young man with me—Shankerlal Banker; the hardships of prison did not cause him any grief, his agony was that of the mind. His mind was seething with ideas and he was in constant mental turmoil. What did he do? After waking up at four in the morning and, disregarding the bitterly cold weather, his first task was to switch on the light and spin. However, I do not even wish to speak of the spinning-wheel today.

But, I do wish to speak of that which he did along with spinning. He chanted the name of Rama and he smiled as he did so. The change that came over him was such that his jailor would repeatedly approach him and run away in dismay, and then come and tell me: "He is always absorbed in himself. He is always spinning; what can I talk to him about?"

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-11-1925

228. FAREWELL MESSAGE TO KUTCH PEOPLE[1]

[*November 3, 1925*][2]

It is difficult to sum up the results of the extraordinary experiences of my Cutch tour. So far as I am personally concerned, I had nothing but kindness and attention from the State and the people. The thing that taxed me most was the 'untouchable' question. Curious devices were resorted to by the orthodox to satisfy their consciences, but there is a great awakening among the untouchables themselves. They are alive to their rights. They understand their responsibilities. Many have undertaken to give up carrion and drink. The common people have no prejudice against them. It is only the so-called higher castes, a microscopic minority, who make a parade of their belief in untouchability which, in private, they would confess is unreasonable and contrary to real religion. But even amongst them, there are a few noble spirits who, in defiance of the caste tyranny, are serving the untouchables with their money, as well as personal labour. These poor people are disqualified from entering into contracts with any person they like so long as they have not discharged their obligations to the creditors with whom they have first dealt. This makes them eternal slaves of their original creditors who dictate what terms they choose.

I have brought these things to the notice of His Highness who, I feel sure, will remove these very serious hardships. Khadi has the greatest possibilities and awaits development at the hands of khadi lovers. Insanitary habits of the townsmen breed plague and cholera, which should be impossible in a dry climate, like

[1] This was also published in *Gujarati*, 8-11-1925.

[2] The message was delivered at Tuna port when Gandhiji left Kutch for Jamnagar on his way to Ahmedabad.

that of Cutch, and among people who are well-fed and strong in body. There is also immediate need for a society to protect trees. By proper attention to tree culture, Cutch, which is in danger of being denuded of its population for want of water, can increase its rainfall.

These are the things on which patriotic Cutchis can well concentrate their attention. Of Cutch politics, for the present, I prefer to say nothing. Everything I was told I have brought to the notice of His Highness, who gave me a patient and long hearing.

The Hindu, 6-11-1925

229. *NOTES*

Lest We Forget

Sjt. J. M. Sengupta[1] writes to me to say that Bengal has decided to hold on Sunday, the 8th November, an all-parties' all-Bengal demonstration against internments and imprisonments without trial, and suggests that such meetings should be held all over India. For my part, I heartily endorse the suggestion. I have passed it on to Pandit Motilal Nehru and, subject to his consent and approval, notices will have been issued before this is in print. I am writing this in Cutch, a part of India which is isolated from all chief centres of activity. It is, therefore, difficult for me to follow or overtake events that are happening outside from day to day. I can, therefore, merely express my opinion on the suggestion. It is this. We may make no impression upon a Government that is irresponsive to public opinion. But a demonstration like the one suggested by Sjt. Sengupta will be a reminder to us that there are countrymen whom we believe to be innocent, but who are either interned or imprisoned without any trial whatever. Every day that passes without bringing these men to an open trial or, in default, without discharging them, makes heavier the indictment against the Government. I hope, therefore, that meetings will be held all over India composed of men belonging to all parties to demonstrate the national feeling in the matter.

A Scheme of Cow-Protection

In private talks with friends I have often asked them to interest themselves in and help the movement on its constructive

[1] Leader of the Swaraj Party in the Bengal Legislative Council, Mayor of Calcutta and President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

side. In response to their desire, I publish the scheme I have discussed with some:

1. In order to test the efficacy of tanneries as part of a programme of cow-protection, it is necessary to own one and to utilize it not for profit, but purely for cow-protection. For this purpose a sum of Rs. 1,25,000 is required to be invested in one of the existing tanneries. The information in my possession shows that the majority of existing tanneries buy and cure the hide of slaughtered cattle, and that India exports the bulk of the hide of dead cattle. These conditions of things can only be remedied by lovers of the cow controlling tanneries and preventing by their philanthropy leather becoming an article of trade competition.

2. Preliminary research must be carried out for exploring the possibilities not of remunerative dairy farming, but of conducting dairies on a vast scale, if without profit, also without loss in the long run. For this preliminary work, a sum of ten thousand rupees at least must be spent inside of twelve months in engaging services of dairy experts and finding out suitable places for accommodating tens of thousands of cattle. Without acquiring such control the terrible toll we pay in the slaughter of cattle which are simply through ill use or ignorance rendered profitless and, therefore, sold for slaughter by the *goalas* in the several cities of India must continue. Nothing can save the cattle from the butcher's knife if they become uneconomic.

3. Scholarships must be found for preparing students for tannery and dairy work. For this a sum of Rs. 5,000 for one year is necessary.

4. A sum of Rs. 3,000 is required for books on cattle-breeding, dairy farming, tannery, etc.

Thus, a sum of Rs. 1,28,000 is required for capital expenditure and Rs. 15,000 for research, exploration and preparation. I omit the current expenditure, which must be found from the normal income from membership of the All-India Cow-Protection Association. It must be dissolved if it cannot pay its way. In terms of the authority given to me, I have already engaged the services of a paid secretary. Sjt. V. G. Desai has been selected for the work to be done. Among those whose names were before me, he appeared to me to be the fittest. He is an English and Sanskrit scholar. He is a lover of animals and has been always a believer in cow-protection. He had choice of work before him and had made cow-protection, I hope, his final and life-long choice. I have known him intimately ever since my return to

India in 1915. He is to receive a salary of Rs. 200 per month. At the present moment, he is lodged at the Satyagraha Ashram without having to pay any rent. But it may become necessary to pay twenty-five rupees in addition, in lieu of rent. If donations in respect of the scheme are received, it will be necessary to increase the paid staff. At the present moment not even an office boy has been engaged. Expansion of the work depends upon public response. During the Cutch tour, I have been expounding the scheme to the Cutch friends and they have given me already over Rs. 3,000, which includes the sum of Rs. 500 from a Khoja friend. There must be, however, a better response both in donations and membership.

Young India, 5-11-1925

230. SANITATION IN AHMEDABAD

The following is the letter referred to in the above article by Dr. Hariprasad Desai, one of the members of the Sanitary Committee, Ahmedabad Municipal Board:[1]

This letter was begun on the 2nd October and finished on the 4th. The postscript was appended thereafter, probably on the same date. This is not a letter. It is a little pamphlet. But it is brimming over with so much humour and urbane persiflage, and so much art that I am sure the reader will read it with the same interest as I have done. Dr. Hariprasad has succeeded in giving not only an intensely interesting, but a perfectly vivid, picture of our filth and squalor. I wish him complete success in his endeavour.

But this is only paying compliments. My innermost desire would be to join him with a spade, a broom, a *chunam* bucket and a brush. But I know that I can have little to do in a city where Vallabhbhai is the Master Sweeper. I am, therefore, watching what is going on in Ahmedabad as an interested spectator, and wishing that the Ahmedabad Municipality may win

[1] The letter of Dr. Desai, a physician and Congress worker, which is not reproduced here, appeared in *Navajivan*, 28-10-1925. The translation was published in two instalments in *Young India* of 29-10-1925 and 5-11-1925. It provided a first-hand and picturesque description in detail of the appalling insanitary conditions in the Ahmedabad city and its several *pols* or parish-like divisions. It also examined the relative responsibility of different religious communities for the unhygienic state, gave an idea of the work of sanitary reform in progress and sought Gandhiji's support.

the first place in India in point of cleanliness, cohesion, primary education and in the supply of clean and cheap milk. I am sure that, if it succeeds in achieving this, Ahmedabad will have given a considerable share in the movement for swaraj.

But this is a Himalayan task. It is not the work of one or two men. Everyone must put his or her shoulder to the wheel —men and women, boys and girls, Swarajists and No-changers, titled men and commoners, rich and poor. Only then could Ahmedabad be made an ideal city. If everyone of us holds himself severally responsible for removing the dirt and filth in any part of the city and if we strive to keep all parts as clean as we keep our seats, only then would it be an ideal city.

The wealthy must help with money, sanitarians with their knowledge, you and everyone with voluntary service. Today the work is being done in the teeth of ignorance, indifference and opposition. Why should volunteers be not forthcoming to keep the city clean? Why should not the boys of schools and colleges have a training in sanitation and offer themselves as volunteers?

Dr. Hariprasad's letter suggests many another thought. But I shall not cap a pamphlet with another. Let us all understand and appreciate Dr. Hariprasad's sweet irony and help in this work of humanitarian service. If his letter bears that much fruit, it will not have been written by him and published by me in vain.

Young India, 29-10-1925 and 5-11-1925

231. *THE POET AND THE CHARKHA*

When Sir Rabindranath's criticism of the charkha was published some time ago,[1] several friends asked me to reply to it. Being heavily engaged, I was unable then to study it in full. But I had read enough of it to know its trend. I was in no hurry to reply. Those who had read it were too much agitated or influenced to be able to appreciate what I might have then written even if I had the time. Now, therefore, is really the time for me to write on it and to ensure a dispassionate view being taken of the Poet's criticism or my reply, if such it may be called.

The criticism is a sharp rebuke to Acharya Ray[2] for his impatience of the Poet's and Acharya Seal's position regarding the charkha, and gentle rebuke to me for my exclusive and excessive

[1] *Vide* Appendix V.
[2] Prafulla Chandra Ray

love of it. Let the public understand that the Poet does not deny its great economic value. Let them know that he signed the appeal for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial after he had written his criticism. He signed the appeal after studying its contents carefully and, even as he signed it, he sent me the message that he had written something on the charkha which might not quite please me. I knew, therefore, what was coming. But it has not displeased me. Why should mere disagreement with my views displease? If every disagreement were to displease, since no two men agree exactly on all points, life would be a bundle of unpleasant sensations and, therefore, a perfect nuisance. On the contrary the frank criticism pleases me. For our friendship becomes all the richer for our disagreements. Friends to be friends are not called upon to agree even on most points. Only, disagreements must have no sharpness, much less bitterness, about them. And I gratefully admit that there is none about the Poet's criticism.

I am obliged to make these prefatory remarks as dame rumour has whispered that jealousy is the root of all that criticism. Such baseless suspicion betrays an atmosphere of weakness and intolerance. A little reflection must remove all ground for such a cruel charge. Of what should the Poet be jealous in me? Jealousy presupposes the possibility of rivalry. Well, I have never succeeded in writing a single rhyme in my life. There is nothing of the Poet about me. I cannot aspire after his greatness. He is the undisputed master of it. The world today does not possess his equal as a poet. My 'mahatmaship' has no relation to the Poet's undisputed position. It is time to realize that our fields are absolutely different and at no point overlapping. The Poet lives in a magnificent world of his own creation—his world of ideas. I am a slave of somebody else's creation—the spinning-wheel. The Poet makes his *gopis* dance to the tune of his flute. I wander after my beloved Sita, the charkha, and seek to deliver her from the ten-headed monster from Japan, Manchester, Paris, etc. The Poet is an inventor—he creates, destroys and recreates. I am an explorer and having discovered a thing, I must cling to it. The Poet presents the world with new and attractive things from day to day. I can merely show the hidden possibilities of old and even worn-out things. The world easily finds an honourable place for the magician who produces new and dazzling things. I have to struggle laboriously to find a corner for my worn-out things. Thus there is no competition between us. But I may say in all humility that we complement each other's activity.

The fact is that the Poet's criticism is a poetic licence and he who takes it literally is in danger of finding himself in an awkward corner. An ancient poet has said that Solomon arrayed in all his glory was not like one of the lilies of the field. He clearly referred to the natural beauty and innocence of the lily contrasted with the artificiality of Solomon's glory and his sinfulness in spite of his many good deeds. Or take the poetical licence in: 'It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.' We know that no camel has ever passed through the eye of a needle and we know too that rich men like Janaka have entered the Kingdom of Heaven. Or take the beautiful simile of human teeth being likened to the pomegranate seed. Foolish women who have taken the poetical exaggeration literally have been found to disfigure, and even harm, their teeth. Painters and poets are obliged to exaggerate the proportions of their figures in order to give a true perspective. Those therefore who take the Poet's denunciation of the charkha literally will be doing an injustice to the Poet and an injury to themselves.

The Poet does not, he is not expected, he has no need, to read *Young India*. All he knows about the movement is what he has picked up from table talk. He has, therefore, denounced what he has imagined to be the excesses of the charkha cult.

He thinks, for instance, that I want everybody to spin the whole of his or her time to the exclusion of all other activity, that is to say, that I want the poet to forsake his muse, the farmer his plough, the lawyer his brief and the doctor his lancet. So far is this from truth that I have asked no one to abandon his calling but, on the contrary, to adorn it by giving every day only thirty minutes to spinning as sacrifice for the whole nation. I have, indeed, asked the famishing man or woman who is idle for want of any work whatsoever to spin for a living and the half-starved farmer to spin during his leisure hours to supplement his slender resources. If the Poet span half an hour daily his poetry would gain in richness. For it would then represent the poor man's wants and woes in a more forcible manner than now.

The Poet thinks that the charkha is calculated to bring about a death-like sameness in the nation and, thus imagining, he would shun it if he could. The truth is that the charkha is intended to realize the essential and living oneness of interest among India's myriads. Behind the magnificent and kaleidoscopic variety, one discovers in nature a unity of purpose, design and form which is equally unmistakable. No two men are

absolutely alike, not even twins, and yet there is much that is indispensably common to all mankind. And behind the commonness of form there is the same life pervading all. The idea of sameness or oneness was carried by Shankara to its utmost logical and natural limit and he exclaimed that there was only one truth, one God—*Brahman*—and all form, *nam*, *rupa* was illusion or illusory, evanescent. We need not debate whether what we see is unreal; and whether the real behind the unreality is what we do not see. Let both be equally real, if you will. All I say is that there is a sameness, identity or oneness behind the multiplicity and variety. And so do I hold that behind a variety of occupations there is an indispensable sameness also of occupation. Is not agriculture common to the vast majority of mankind? Even so, was spinning common not long ago to a vast majority of mankind? Just as both prince and peasant must eat and clothe themselves so must both labour for supplying their primary wants. The prince may do so if only by way of symbol and sacrifice, but that much is indispensable for him if he will be true to himself and his people. Europe may not realize this vital necessity at the present moment, because it has made of exploitation of non-European races a religion. But it is a false religion bound to perish in the near future. The non-European races will not for ever allow themselves to be exploited. I have endeavoured to show a way out that is peaceful, humane and, therefore, noble. It may be rejected if it is, the alternative is a tug of war, in which each will try to pull down the other. Then, when non-Europeans will seek to exploit the Europeans, the truth of the charkha will have to be realized. Just as, if we are to live, we must breathe not air imported from England nor eat food so imported, so may we not import cloth made in England. I do not hesitate to carry the doctrine to its logical limit and say that Bengal dare not import her cloth even from Bombay or from Banga Lakshmi. If Bengal will live her natural and free life without exploiting the rest of India or the world outside, she must manufacture her cloth in her own villages as she grows her corn there. Machinery has its place; it has come to stay. But it must not be allowed to displace the necessary human labour. An improved plough is a good thing. But if, by some chance, one man could plough up by some mechanical invention of his the whole of the land of India and control all the agricultural produce and if the millions had no other occupation, they would starve, and being idle, they would become dunces, as many have already become. There is hourly danger of many more being

reduced to that unenviable state. I would welcome every improvement in the cottage machine, but I know that it is criminal to displace the hand labour by the introduction of power-driven spindles unless one is, at the same time, ready to give millions of farmers some other occupation in their homes.

The Irish analogy does not take us very far. It is perfect in so far as it enables us to realize the necessity of economic co-operation. But Indian circumstances being different, the method of working out co-operation is necessarily different. For Indian distress every effort at co-operation has to centre round the charkha if it is to apply to the majority of the inhabitants of this vast peninsula 1,900 miles long and 1,500 broad. A Sir Gangaram may give us a model farm which can be no model for the penniless Indian farmer, who has hardly two to three acres of land which every day runs the risk of being still further cut up.

Round the charkha, that is, amidst the people who have shed their idleness and who have understood the value of co-operation, a national servant would build up a programme of anti-malaria campaign, improved sanitation, settlement of village disputes, conservation and breeding of cattle and hundreds of other beneficial activities. Wherever charkha work is fairly established, all such ameliorative activity is going on according to the capacity of the villagers and the workers concerned.

It is not my purpose to traverse all the Poet's arguments in detail. Where the differences between us are not fundamental—and these I have endeavoured to state—there is nothing in the Poet's argument which I cannot endorse and still maintain my position regarding the charkha. The many things about the charkha which he has ridiculed I have never said. The merits I have claimed for the charkha remain undamaged by the Poet's battery.

One thing, and one thing only, has hurt me, the Poet's belief, again picked up from table talk, that I look upon Ram Mohan Roy as a 'pigmy'. Well, I have never anywhere described that great reformer as a pigmy much less regarded him as such. He is to me as much a giant as he is to the Poet. I do not remember any occasion save one when I had to use Ram Mohan Roy's name. That was in connection with Western education. This was on the Cuttack sands now four years ago.[1] What I do remember having said was that it was possible to attain highest culture without Western education. And when someone men-

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX pp. 476-8.

tioned Ram Mohan Roy, I remember having said that he was a pigmy compared to the unknown authors, say, of the Upanishads. This is altogether different from looking upon Ram Mohan Roy as a pigmy. I do not think meanly of Tennyson if I say that he was a pigmy before Milton or Shakespeare. I claim that I enhance the greatness of both. If I adore the Poet, as he knows I do in spite of differences between us, I am not likely to disparage the greatness of the man who made the great reform movement of Bengal possible and of which the Poet is one of the finest of fruits.

Young India, 5-11-1925

232. *DISTRESS IN ORISSA*

I have a telegram from Mr. Andrews advising me that there is terrible distress among the cattle of Orissa and men also. He has asked me to find ten thousand rupees for keeping the cattle alive and he has written a letter in which he tells me that khaddar is required for women who are almost in a naked state. I am trying to find a reliable agent who would take charge of the work. I do not propose at the present moment to appeal for funds to the public as there is still a large amount remaining unspent out of the Malabar Relief Fund that the readers of *Young India* and *Navajivan* contributed. As I am writing this note in Cutch, I do not know the exact amount available. But I have no right to disburse anything from the Malabar Relief Fund for relief in Orissa without the consent of the donors. I, therefore, appeal to the donors of the Malabar Relief Fund to send me, if they approve of my suggestion, their consent to utilize the balance of their contributions for relief of distress in Orissa. Those who may send their consent are requested to mention the original amount paid so as to enable me to identify the amount.

Young India, 5-11-1925

233. A HOTCH-POT OF QUESTIONS

I have got some taxing readers of *Young India* who often ask inconvenient questions. But, as they please them, I must suffer the inconvenience and answer their questions, however vexing they may be. This is how a correspondent fires the first shot:

> Who is responsible for the word 'Mahatma' before your name in the list of Executive Councillors, A.I.S.A., as given in *Young India* of 1st October?

The correspondent may depend upon it that the editor is not responsible for the appearance of the word 'Mahatma' in the list of members of the Council of A.I.S.A. Those who passed the constitution are certainly responsible for it. Had I offered satyagraha against it, the word might not have appeared. But I did not consider the offence to be serious enough to call for the use of that terrible weapon. Unless some catastrophe takes place the offensive word will always be associated with my name, and the patient critics must tolerate it even as I do.

> You say you live, in common with other fellow-workers, on the charity of friends who defray the expenses of Sabarmati Satyagraha Ashram. Do you think it proper for an institution of able-bodied men to live on the charity of friends?

The correspondent has taken the word 'charity' too literally. Let him understand that every member of the institution gives both his or her body and mind to its work. But the institution can still be said to live on the charity of friends, because the latter get no return for their donations. The fruits of the labour of the inmates go to the nation.

> What is your view on what Tolstoy calls 'bread labour'? Do you really earn your living by your bodily labour?

Strictly speaking, bread labour is not a word of Tolstoy's coining. He took it from another Russian writer Bondarif, and it means that everyone is expected to perform sufficient body labour in order to entitle him to it. It is not, therefore, necessary to earn one's living by bread labour, taking the word living in its broader sense. But everyone must perform some useful body labour. For me, at the present moment, spinning is the only body labour I give. It is a mere symbol. I do not give enough body labour.

That is also one of the reasons why I consider myself as living upon charity. But I also believe that such men will have to be found in every nation who will give themselves body, soul and mind to it and for their sustenance throw themselves on the mercy of their fellowmen, that is, on God.

> I think that you have said somewhere that young men must simplify their wants and must ordinarily be able to live on Rs. 30 a month. Is it possible for educated youths to live without books, without travels, without even a wish to come into contact with great minds? All these things mean money. They must save something, too, to provide against circumstances of age, sickness, etc.

In a well-ordered society, such national servants as the correspondent refers to will have access to free libraries and the necessary travelling expenses will be paid by the nation, and the very nature of their work will bring them in contact with great minds. They will also be supported by the nation during sickness, old age, etc. This is no new conception, whether for India or elsewhere.

> You seem to advocate the starting of temples for *Panchamas* as a step in the direction of their amelioration. Is it not a fact that the Hindu mind, confined for generations past within things like the temple, has generally lost the power of any larger vision of God? When you seek to remove untouchability, when you seek to raise the untouchables and accord them a place of freedom and dignity in society, need you do so by encouraging them to copy the present-day caste Hindus even in the matter of the latter's vices, sins and superstitions? In the course of ameliorating the untouchables, may we not also reform the Hindu community as a whole, so far at least as worship of temple gods is concerned? In the course of freeing the depressed classes from their present social disabilities, may we not seek also to free their mind and thought, and thus let social reforms bring into being a broader religious and intellectual outlook?
>
> It may be pointed out as a parallel case that the khaddar propaganda to be really successful must not only aim at replacement of foreign cloth, but also seek to remove the non-national and anti-climatic fashions and tastes in dress, as indeed it has already done to some extent.

I do not regard the existence of temples as a sin or superstition. Some form of common worship, and a common place of worship appear to be a human necessity. Whether the temples should contain images or not is a matter of temperament and taste. I do not regard a Hindu or a Roman Catholic place of worship containing images as necessarily bad or superstitious and

a mosque or a Protestant place of worship being good or free of superstition merely because of their exclusion of images. A symbol such as a Cross or a book may easily become idolatrous, and, therefore, superstitious. And the worship of the image of child Krishna or Virgin Mary may become ennobling and free of all superstition. It depends upon the attitude of the heart of the worshipper.

I do not see the parallel between the khaddar propaganda and the building of temples for the so-called untouchables. But I grant the argument of the correspondent that the agitation against foreign cloth should include the giving up of unnecessary and harmful foreign fashions and tastes. But this does not need separate preaching. As a rule, those who have adopted khaddar have also eschewed such fashions and tastes in dress as are wholly unnecessary for our climate.

> I am under the impression that you supported the Khilafat cause because your brothers, the Indian Muslims, felt strongly about it. But is it just or right to help any cause without oneself being satisfied as to its intrinsic worth, simply because one's brothers rightly or wrongly feel keenly about it? Or was it that you were satisfied yourself that the Khilafat, as such, was a worthy and right cause? If so, will you give your reasons, seeing that even modern Turkey has at one stroke done away with this institution which she presumably considers is calculated to perpetuate a most unreasonable and virulent type of fanaticism in the Islamic world?

The correspondent is quite correct in his contention that even a brother's cause has to be examined and proved to be just to one's satisfaction before one can help him. I was myself satisfied when I decided to throw in my lot with my Muslim brothers that their cause was just. I must refer to the contemporary files of *Young India* for my reasons for considering the Khilafat cause to be just. Everything that modern Turkey does is not necessarily defensible. Further, Mussalmans may make whatever innovations they like in their practices. A non-Muslim cannot dictate innovations in Islam. All he can do is to examine the general morality of a system or practice before he defends it. I had satisfied myself that there was nothing intrinsically wrong in the institution of Khilafat. The correctness of the Islamic position was admitted by other non-Muslims including Mr. Llyod George himself and the institution was defended by me against non-Muslim attack.

Were you not helping the cause of war when you, both while in Africa and here, enlisted men for field service? How does it tally with your principle of ahimsa?

By enlisting men for ambulance work in South Africa and in England, and recruits for field service in India, I helped not the cause of war, but I helped the institution called the British Empire in whose ultimate beneficial character I then believed. My repugnance to war was as strong then as it is today; and I could not then have and would not have shouldered a rifle. But one's life is not a single straight line; it is a bundle of duties very often conflicting. And one is called upon continually to make one's choice between one duty and another. As a citizen not then, and not even now, a reformer leading an agitation against the institution of war, I had to advise and lead men who believed in war but who, from cowardice or from base motives, or from anger against the British Government, refrained from enlisting. I did not hesitate to advise them that, so long as they believed in war and professed loyalty to the British constitution, they were in duty bound to support it by enlistment. Though I do not believe in the use of arms, and though it is contrary to the religion of ahimsa which I profess, I should not hesitate to join an agitation for a repeal of the debasing Arms Act which I have considered amongst the blackest crimes of the British Government against India. I do not believe in retaliation, but I did not hesitate to tell the villagers near Bettiah four years ago that they who knew nothing of ahimsa were guilty of cowardice in failing to defend the honour of their womenfolk and their property by force of arms. And I have not hesitated as the correspondent should know only recently to tell the Hindus that, if they do not believe in out-and-out ahimsa and cannot practise it, they would be guilty of a crime against their religion and humanity if they failed to defend by force of arms the honour of their women against any kidnapper who chooses to take away their women. And all this advice and my previous practice I hold to be not only consistent with my profession of the religion of ahimsa out and out, but a direct result of it. To state that noble doctrine is simple enough; to know it and to practise it in the midst of a world full of strife, turmoil and passions is a task whose difficulty I realize more and more day by day. And yet the conviction, too, that without it life is not worth living is growing daily deeper.

Young India, 5-11-1925

234. THE CANKER OF SUPERIORITY

The following remarkable paper handed to me at Mymensing by the District Vaisya Sabha Association cannot fail to be of general interest.[1]

It is likely that there is some exaggeration in the foregoing statement. But the reason why I have reproduced the paper is to show how deep the canker of superiority has eaten into the very vitals of Hinduism. The writers, themselves a despised group in the estimation of their so-called superiors, have not hesitated to claim for themselves a status superior to and distinct from those more despised. The same notion of superiority and inferiority runs through the despised untouchables. I notice throughout my tour in Cutch that, as in other parts of India, the untouchables have among themselves also superior and inferior castes, and the higher caste *Antyajas* will not touch the lower caste, will positively refuse to send their children to schools belonging to the lower caste. Intermarriage and interdining between them is unthinkable. This is caste reduced to the grossest absurdity. And it is by way of protest against this arrogation of superiority by one class over another that I delight in calling myself a *Bhangi*, that is, a sweeper, beyond which so far as I am aware inferiority does not travel. He is the social leper shunned by all and yet he belongs to the one group more indispensable than any other for the sanitary well-being of society, and, therefore, its very physical existence. My sympathies are all with gentlemen on whose behalf the foregoing statement was given to me. But I warn them against claiming superiority over men more unfortunately placed than themselves. Let it be their privilege to take even these with them and refuse to take privileges which may be denied to others. It is necessary, if we will rid Hinduism of the curse of unnatural inequalities, for some of us to rise with our whole soul in revolt against it. In my opinion, he who claims superiority by the very nature of the claim forfeits it. Real, natural superiority comes without the claiming. It is recognized ungrudgingly, and ever refused, not pompously, not out of a false sense of modesty, but because the superiority is not even felt, and because the superior man knows that there is no distinction whatsoever between the soul within himself and the soul

[1] For the text of the paper, *vide* Appendix VI.

within one who regards himself as his inferior. Recognition of the essential identity and oneness of all that lives excludes the very idea of superiority and inferiority. Life is duty, not a bundle of rights and privileges. That religion is doomed to destruction which bases itself upon a system of gradations high and low. Such is not the meaning for me of *Varnashrama*. I believe in it because I imagine that it defines the duties of men belonging to the different vocations. And Brahmin is he who is the servant of all, even the Sudras and the untouchables. He dedicates his all to such service and lives upon the charity and sufferance of his fellow-beings. He is no Kshatriya who puts forth pretensions to rank, power and privileges. He alone is a Kshatriya who uses the whole of himself for the defence and honour of society. And a Vaisya who earns for himself only, and believes in merely amassing wealth is a thief. A Sudra because he labours for hire on behalf of society is in no way inferior to the three classes. According to my conception of Hinduism there is no such thing as a fifth or untouchable class. The so-called untouchables are as much privileged labourers of society as Sudras. *Varnashrama* seems to me to be an ideal system conceived for the highest good of society. What we see today is a travesty and a mockery of the original. And if *Varnashrama* is to abide, Hindus must sweep away the mockery and restore *Varnashrama* to its pristine dignity.

Young India, 5-11-1925

235. INTERVIEW TO PRESS, AHMEDABAD

Before *November 6, 1925*

Mr. Gandhi returned here after having finished his tour in Cutch. He looks very much pulled down.

Asked about his health, he said:

There is no cause for anxiety about my health. I have certainly grown weaker than I was after my Bengal tour, owing to the very bad roads and the continuous travelling which I had to undergo in Cutch. I am very much shaken, and have lost nearly eight pounds in weight, but the rest wh h I shall get at the Ashram will, I feel sure, restore the lost weight and lost strength. I must make it clear that nobody is to blame for the trials of the Cutch tour, which, we had all thought, would give me, comparatively speaking, rest from incessant toil. Everything possible

was done by all around me to make me comfortable, but nobody had bargained for the nature of the toil that travelling in carts, on rough roads, would mean for my dilapidated limbs.

Asked as to what he will do in the Cawnpore Congress, Mahatmaji said:

My mind is a perfect blank as to what I shall do in the Congress, except that, wherever possible, I shall assist the Swarajists in accordance with my promise; but the Congress programme will have to be framed by Mrs. Sarojini Devi in consultation with Pandit Motilalji.

Asked if they would do nothing to bring the Liberals and the Independents within the Congress, Mr. Gandhi said:

There is no reason why the Liberals and the Independents should not join the Congress and convert the Swarajists to their view, even as they entered the Councils and the Assembly to convert their opponents and the Government to their view.

Mr. Gandhi proposes to stay in his Ashram for full one month.

The Hindu, 6-11-1925

236. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

November 7, 1925

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have the letter signed by you and Hakim Saheb.[1] What is the use of the Congress President sending a cable to the League of Nations? I feel like a caged lion, only with this difference that the lion foams and frets and gnashes his teeth and lashes the iron bars furiously in the vain attempt to be free, whereas I recognize my limitations and refuse to foam and fret. If we had any power behind us, I would immediately send the cable suggested by you. Things I omit to mention in the pages of *Young India* are buried deep down in my bosom and they are far weightier than those I advertise. But I do not fail to advertise them daily before the Unseen Power. When I think of the horizon about us, my heart becomes sick and weary. And when I listen to the still small voice within, I derive hope and smile in spite

[1] The letter dealt with the hardships of the Druses, inhabiting Southern Syria, at the hands of the Mandatory Power, France. For the text, *vide* "Our Impotence", 12-11-1925.

of the conflagration raging round me. Do save me from having to advertise our impotence.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 10597

237. LETTER TO P. A. NARIELWALA

SABARMATI,
November 7, 1925

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and donation. If you will send it directly to the Secretary, A.I.S.A., Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, it will be more convenient.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

[P. A.] NARIELWALA, ESQ.
"ROSE LEA"
ALTAMONT ROAD
CUMBALLA HILL
BOMBAY

From the original: C. W. 9275. Courtesy: P. A. Narielwala

233. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

Kartika Vad 8 [November 8, 1925][1]

BHAI SHANTIKUMAR,

I had your two letters in Kutch. Give me the correct information, if indeed you have it, about Sholapur. Have you come to know the main cause of the quarrel?

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have used my left hand as the right hand is out of action.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4699. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

[1] The reference in the letter to Kutch suggests that it was written in 1925.

239. OUR IMPOTENCE

The following letter has been addressed to me by Hakim-saheb Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari who have just returned from a prolonged tour on the continent including Syria:

> Recent events in Southern Syria, the country where the Druses live, and where an armed resistance is being carried on by these oppressed people against the French, the Mandatory Power, have brought to light the frightfulness of the French authorities there. A cable, received two days back from Palestine sent by Syed Jamaluddin-al-Husaini, Secretary of Lajnatut-Tanfiziyah, the most popular and influential organization of the people of Palestine, says that the town of Damascus has terribly suffered from the French bombardment and the death-roll has been tremendous. Although from the various accounts published in the British Press one could gather that things were bad in Syria, yet this telegram from Palestine and Reuter's cable from Cairo, received subsequently, show the utter barbarity and inhumanity which is being practised by the French on the population in the Druse country and Damascus.
>
> Apart from the recent instances of frightfulness, our tour in Syria brought under our observation many facts which proved the callousness of the French and their utter disregard for the elementary rights of the people of the mandated territory in Syria.
>
> We have already published our experiences in the Indian Press, but in order to save you the trouble of reading the Urdu reports, published in the *Hamdard*, we would briefly give you some of the most salient facts regarding the situation in Syria.
>
> When the League of Nations gave the mandate of Syria to France, the French Government and the High Commissioner made a public declaration to the people of Syria of granting them complete autonomy regarding their internal affairs. Syria was to be divided in several autonomous provinces each with a governor, elected by the people and an advisory council representing the people and elected by them. Whilst this promise was partially and outwardly carried out in the provinces of Lebanon and Damascus, the province of Hauran, the country of the Druses, was neither given autonomy nor a council for a president elected by them, but a French officer Captain Carbiollet, was forced on the Druses against their wish and when they made demonstrations and representations against this, their deputation was insulted, their notables were publicly thrashed and imprisoned, and their womenfolk were maltreated.

Captain Carbiollet, who had come from French Congo, practised all the atrocities to which the poor inhabitants of the French Congo had been subjected by the French, but the Druses being an ancient, proud, warlike race resisted these methods and were forced to take up arms. They inflicted considerable losses on the French forces and have so far resisted the French invasion of their country successfully, but the methods practised by the French in the adjoining parts of Syria, viz., Damascus and Alleppo, are causing the spread of revolt to these parts. The telegrams quoted above refer to the most recent atrocities committed on the people of Damascus.

The French Government are also practising unfair and dishonest methods and are depleting the country of its wealth by removing all the gold in the country and replacing it by paper money. They are gradually undermining all the economic resources of the country which is resulting in destitution and poverty. To add to this depletion, they have also been collecting gold from the people of towns and villages in the shape of fines and punishments.

We are writing this to you in order to elicit your sympathy for these Asiatic brethren, and to request you, as the President of the Congress, to send a cable to the League of Nations which has granted this mandate to France, and to instruct other Congress organizations to do the same. We are conscious that the present situation in India is not very favourable to such an action, but it is our considered opinion as Indians, as Muslims, and as Asiatics that we should sympathize with all the oppressed Asiatic people and cultivate friendly relations with them which would be beneficial to us and to them.

I could not see my way to accept their advice to send a cable to the League of Nations in the name of the Congress, and therefore sent the following answer:[1]

But the next best thing I could do was to publish the valuable letter and my reply. I do not believe in making appeals when there is no force behind them whether moral or material. Moral force comes from the determination of the appellants to do something, to sacrifice something for the sake of making their appeal effective. Even children instinctively know this elementary principle. They starve, they cry, or, if they are naughty, they do not hesitate to strike their mothers who will not grant their peremptory demands. Unless we recognize and are prepared to reduce to practice this principle we can but expose the Congress and ourselves to ridicule, if not worse.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Dr. M. A. Ansari", 7-11-1925.

We cannot be naughty even if we will. We *can* suffer if *only* we will. I want us as Indians, Hindus or Mussalmans, Christians or Parsis, or Asiatics to realize our impotence in the face of this humiliation, babarity, Dyerism, or call it what you will, inflicted on Syria. A definite realization of our impotence might teach us to imitate if it is only the animals who in the presence of stormy weather come close together and seek warmth and courage from one another. They do not make a vain appeal to the god of the weather to moderate his wrath. They simply provide against it.

And we? Hindus and Mussalmans fight against one another and the gulf seems to be daily widening. We have not yet understood the meaning of the charkha. Those that have find all kinds of pretexts not to wear khaddar and not to spin. The storm is raging round us. And instead of seeking warmth one from the other, we prefer to shiver or petition the god of storms to stay his hand. If I cannot bring about Hindu-Muslim union or persuade the people to take up the wheel, I have the wisdom at least not to sign any petition for mercy.

And what is the League of Nations? Is it not in reality merely England and France? Do the other powers count? Is it any use appealing to France which is denying her motto of Fraternity, Equality and Justice? She has denied justice to Germany, there is little fraternity between her and the Riffs, and the doctrine of equality she is trampling underfoot in Syria. If we would appeal to England, we need not go to the League of Nations. She is much nearer home. She is perched on the heights of Simla except when she descends to Delhi for a brief period. But to appeal to her is to appeal to Caesar against Augustus.

Let us then perceive the truth in its nakedness and learn to appeal to the nation to do her duty. Relief of Syria lies through India. And if we cannot appreciate our greatness, let us confess our littleness and say nothing. But we need not be little. Let us do at least one thing thoroughly—either fight to the bitter end, even as our brothers the four-footed animals often do, or, as men, let us learn and teach through co-operation on the largest scale known to the world the uselessness, nay, the sinfulness of exploitation of those weaker than ourselves. That co-operation among millions is possible only through the spinning-wheel.

Young India, 12-11-1925

240. *NOTES*

Messenger of Peace

Mr. C. F. Andrews's self-chosen function is to do the service he can and think no more about it. His service takes the form of bringing about peace. He had hardly finished his work in Orissa among the men or cattle in distress or among the mill-hands of Bombay, when he felt the call to go to South Africa and help the Indian settlers who are in distress. But he will be helping not only the Indians there but also the Europeans. He has no malice or anger in him. He wants no favours for the Indians. He wants bare justice. Mr. Andrews is no stranger to South Africa.[1] South African statesmen know and admit that he is as much Europeans' friend as Indians'. The Indian question has reached a most critical stage. For the Indians resident in South Africa it is a matter practically of life and death. Mr. Andrews's presence in their midst at this juncture must bring the greatest comfort to them. May this good friend's labours bear ample fruit as they have done before now. Let the settlers, however, not be lulled into a sense of false security by Mr. Andrews's presence which by itself can bring them little relief. He can but guide, advise and negotiate. But all the guidance, advice and negotiation will come to nothing if there is no cohesion or courage among the settlers themselves.

An Opium Report

The Congress Opium Enquiry Report for Assam has been just published and can be had at the Congress Office, Jorhat, Assam, or of Mr. C. F. Andrews, Santiniketan, for Rs. 1/8 or two shillings. It is well printed and covers 166 pages including a map, appendices, a glossary of unusual terms and a subject index. The report itself covers 44 pages. It has nine chapters. There is, too, an introduction by Mr. C. F. Andrews who was a co-opted member and who is mainly responsible for the creation of the Committee and the conduct of the Enquiry. Sjt. Kuladhar Chatia was the chairman of the Committee. This is the tribute Mr. Andrews pays to the workers:

[1] Andrews had visited the country in 1914, when Gandhiji was still there; *vide* Vol. XII.

I wish to express my sincere admiration for the devoted courage and perseverance of the workers on the present committee who have sacrificed time and ease and leisure and business occupations in order to do this service to their country. This enquiry is one among a series. Assam was the first province chosen because it has the blackest record for opium in all India. Whereas the standard medical requirement of opium, according to the League of Nations, is 6 seers per each 10,000, the lowest figure for Assam is over 45 seers and the highest over 237 seers! The report shows that, during the Non-co-operation period, the figures for opium dropped from 1,614 maunds to 884. This was due to picketing which was rendered illegal. 1,100 workers were imprisoned including lawyers, graduates, college students, etc. But I must not anticipate the pleasure that a patriot or a reformer would gain by reading the whole of the instructive report. I must, therefore, close this review of the report by copying the recommendations.

(1) The sale of opium and its derivations should be ultimately limited to the medical and scientific needs of Assam.

(2) Provision should be made for confirmed addicts above the age of forty, enabling them to procure a rationed amount of opium, their names being registered for that purpose.

(3) All opium-addicts, who are under forty years of age, should be dealt with as medical patients. Wherever opium is needed by them, it should be given only under the order of a fully qualified doctor, the medical permission to obtain it being subject to quarterly renewal.

(4) These changes would be carried out within the next five years. At the end of five years, opium should be placed on the list of poisons under a Dangerous Drugs Act, and treated as such for all inhabitants of Assam.

While much depends on the Government action, we feel that no progress can be made without the education of public opinion. The Non-co-operation movement showed what a great advance could be made in opium restriction by voluntary effort and public propaganda. The decrease in consumption in a single year is a proof of what can be done by these methods. This work needs to be still further promoted and sustained.

We, therefore, appeal to all those who desire the welfare of Assam to organize themselves into anti-opium societies and to advocate opium prohibition amongst the people in general. This will lead to the education of public opinion against the opium evil and create a moral atmosphere, without which no great success can be achieved. Every avenue of approaching the illiterate masses, who are the greatest consumers, should be employed. Especially

> necessary is the careful training of the young children in all the elementary schools of the Assam valley and among the hill tribes. We would invite the co-operation of all sections of the community in this educational work, and we would specially appeal to the missionaries to help us in organizing temperance societies among the hill tribes with whom they are closely connected.
>
> Finally, we would venture to ask Mahatma Gandhi once more to come to Assam and put himself at the head of a great anti-opium campaign to be carried on by entirely peaceful means.

I note the appeal made to me. It was a matter of deep regret to me that I was unable to take in Assam during the Bengal tour when the cruel hand of death snatched away Deshbandhu from us. I am, however, under promise to Sjt. Phooken to visit that fair garden next year if all goes well. My terms are well known. Deshbandhu's formula was men, munitions and money. It must abide even though he is not with us in body. Munitions are hand-spun yarn—bullets that hurt no one and whose saving power has no limits. I would undertake to wean the Assamese from the opium habit if Sjt. Phooken and his friends will induce them by their own glorious example to shed their idleness and take to charkha. He believes and I believe with him that Assam has great possibilities for khaddar. May they soon become realities. Then I shall excuse every learned Assamese for having been lured into the Councils net.

Cow-Protection Essay

The readers will be glad to learn that Acharya Dhruva and Sjt. C. V. Vaidya have both kindly consented to be judges of the competition essays. I only hope that the essays will be worthy of the great scholars who have consented to judge them and the subject chosen. Acharya Dhruva suggests that I should make it clear that the scholars should examine the Shastras not from the dry and profitless dialectic standpoint but from the broad historical standpoint. So also does he hope the essayists will deal with the question of tanneries and dairies. They will, therefore, historically trace the growth of cow-protection and examine all possible ways of protecting and preserving the cow and hence cattle life, not inconsistent with the sanctions of religion.

A correspondent inquires what length the essay should be. No limit has been considered necessary because it depends upon the manner of treatment. But I would say generally that the shorter the essay the better it would be. I know the judges well enough to be able to say for them that they will not in any

way be influenced by the length of the essays. Each competitor will therefore use his own discretion. Only I hope that they will carefully revise their compositions and prune them down wherever necessary. I give this caution in the light of my experience of the essays on spinning.

Another correspondent suggests extension of the time limit for the very cogent reason that Sanskrit professors who may wish to take part in the competition may not be able to finish their labours within the stipulated period. I, therefore, gladly extend the time to 31st May 1926 instead of 31st March next.

There remains one suggestion to consider. A correspondent questions the utility of choosing Sanskrit as one of the languages for the essay. The reason for selecting Sanskrit is to enable and induce the very large number of learned pundits throughout India to give the nation the benefit of their deep learning. During my peregrinations in the South I had the honour of meeting several pundits, who were deeply interested in modern movements, but of whose learning we receive little benefit because Sanskrit learning is at a discount. I hope that Sanskrit scholars who do not know English well enough or in spite of their knowledge of the latter will give the nation a standard treatise in Sanskrit. I need hardly say that if a Sanskrit essay wins the prize it will be translated not only in English and Hindi but in Urdu and all other important languages. It will all depend upon the merit of the prize essay. I shall hope that we shall have a treatise of such merit as to occupy a permanent place in religious literature no matter in what language the original is written.

SPIN, SPIN, SPIN

If you feel the force of Hakim Saheb's letter reproduced elsewhere, you will join the A.I.S.A. and help to achieve the one big thing it is possible for the nation to achieve even today. She will do so when many of us do it. The best method of doing it is to join the A.I.S.A. and induce others to do likewise. Do not find out excuses for not spinning and not wearing khaddar, but rather discover the many reasons why you should. You can join the Association without sacrificing any of your other activities. The only thing you are called upon to sacrifice is your taste for foreign or mill-made cloth. There is not much there to sacrifice, if you will but put against it the tremendous national gain. We have been talking about swadeshi for the past thirty years. We have been talking loosely about boycott of foreign goods,

British goods at least, since 1906. We have been still more loosely practising it. We have succeeded in nothing. Experience has shown that we can only achieve boycott of foreign cloth and that alone. Reason proclaims that we must achieve it, if we would at all live. It is our right as well as duty. I make bold to say that nothing has come nearer success than this one simple and necessary boycott. It can be made wholly successful if enough good people join the Spinners' Association.

A KHADI CATALOGUE

The manager of the Khadi Bhandar, Princess Street, run in Bombay by the All-India Khadi Board (now All-India Spinners' Association) has sent me a copy of his neatly printed price list. It shows the progress made by khaddar. The total sales during the four years of its existence amount to Rs. 8,30,329. The highest sales were in 1922-23, viz., Rs. 2,45,515, the lowest during the current year, viz., Rs. 1,68,280. It has been suggested that the sales went up in 1922-23 because I was in jail. People thought and rightly that the more khaddar they used the nearer was swaraj. And swaraj meant my discharge. The flaw, however, consisted in the reasoning that khaddar was only a temporary necessity. Whereas the fact is that it is as necessary for all times as native food and native air are. The lower sales therefore are better in a way if they represent permanent custom. The existence of this and other khaddar stores shows that they supply a felt want. The political effect of khaddar however can be obtained only when the sales are not a little over one hundred thousand rupees per year but they amount to several crores, strictly speaking, sixty crores. Bombay, therefore, should support not one or two such stores but several hundred, even as it today supports several hundred foreign cloth stores. There is now no excuse for the public not to support this and such other stores. For they satisfy all reasonable tastes. I observe in the catalogue, shirtings, muslin khadi, saris, handkerchiefs, towels, dhotis, ready-made shirts, vests, caps, bags, bedsheets, shawls, curtains, counterpanes, tablecloths, pillow-slips, blouses, drawers for babies and adults, etc. "But," says the critic, "compare the prices." I compare them and satisfy myself that, where the price is apparently higher, it is in reality cheaper, for in addition to getting khaddar for your money, you contribute towards the attainment of swaraj. If you do not believe in the capacity of khaddar to secure swaraj, then know that by buying khaddar you are at least partly supporting some starving man or woman. If an

average khaddar wearer pays Rs. 10 per year for his cloth then four such wearers wholly support at least one starving person per year. Can khaddar with that potentiality be ever considered dear by one who loves his country and cares for the poor?

Young India, 12-11-1925

241. "RAMANAMA" AND KHADI

"Juna Jogi"[1] writes as follows:[2]

This letter has been lying with me for two months. I had hoped, when I had leisure, to place it before the readers of *Navajivan*. I have found that leisure today or, rather, I have contrived to find it. The writer has advised me not to go fault-finding. And let it not be said that I am finding fault with his letter if I happen to criticize it, for the motive behind my criticism is somehow to fit it into these pages so as to expound the glory of God. Let the writer and others know that I am adopting whatever in it is worth adopting. I feel I have nothing new to learn about the glory of *Ramanama* as I have realized it through experience. And I hold that it cannot be propagated in the same manner as khadi or swaraj. In these very difficult times, even the utterance of the Name is done in a wrong way. In other words, I have heard it repeated often for mere show, sometimes for selfish ends and sometimes even in order to feed licentious conduct. There would be nothing to object to if one uttered *Mara* reversing the order of syllables, while chanting the Name. We read of the pure in heart having attained *mukti* even by chanting it in an erroneous manner and we can believe this too to be true. However, what are we to say of sinners who, although their pronunciation is perfect, chant the *mantra* of *Ramanama* in order to nourish their sins? That is why I am afraid of any propaganda for *Ramanama*. Those persons who believe that by sitting together in company and loudly repeating the Name they can wash away all their past, present and future sins and that nothing besides this shouting is expected of them, deserve to be bowed to from a distance. No one should imitate them. I, for my part, regard those who support and spread khadi, etc., as being worthy of repeating *Ramanama*. But repeating the Name,

[1] A pseudonym meaning "old worker"

[2] The letter is not translated here; the correspondent advised Gandhiji to attach greater importance to *Ramanama* than to swaraj.

I find, has nowhere brought about an atmosphere congenial for the spread of khadi.

How can a servant of Rama put it down in writing saying hat no one in this world has been able to convert learned men?[1] It does not seem to me that I am under any delusion. Learned persons too belong to the world of Rama and many of them have attained *moksha* by repeating His Name. The truth of the matter is that no one but a devotee can convert learned persons. And I who hope to become a devotee am ever trying to make these persons understand. And as I have no delusion, I am not angry with those who do not understand but rather with myself because my devotion is imperfect. Hence in order that Rama may for ever dwell in my heart I welcome the advice that I should further purify my heart, and I constantly give myself such advice. It is the devotee who is to blame, not the listener, if he cannot make his devotion interesting. If the devotion has any attractive qualities, these will certainly be seized upon by the listener; however, is the listener to blame if he can find nothing interesting in it? If Krishna's flute had been a broken one and if the *gopis* had shrunk from the harsh tunes coming out of it, Krishna would have been disgraced and no one would blame the *gopis*. Poor Arjuna was hardly aware of the fact that he was a mere book-worm, or that he was making a false claim to learning. However, Krishna's clarity of vision enabled him to purify Arjuna's vision and cure him of his delusion. Hence, one who wishes to propagate *Ramanama* should do so after convincing himself, purifying himself and, establishing Rama's kingdom in his own heart. To this the world will respond and it will begin chanting His Name. However, to have it chanted anywhere and in any manner one likes is to bring disgrace to *Ramanama* by adding to the hypocrisy which is already there and accelerating the torrential current of atheism.

It is hardly possible for one today to stay in peace in one place.[2] How can even Rama have any effect on one whose body is chained but whose mind constantly traverses across millions of miles? However, what can be said of the person who,

[1] The correspondent had said in the letter: "In this world none has been able to convert learned persons. Those who possess the spirit of devotion can be converted. Rama and Krishna did not hold discussions with learned persons."

[2] This is with reference to what the correspondent has said: "God is His own true devotee and teaches devotion to the world. You should now stay in peace, in one place."

like Damayanti searching for Nala, wanders from one forest to another, questions even the trees and animals of the whereabouts of Rama—should it be said of him that he is a wanderer or, should it be said that he stays in peace in one place? Can we not say rather that the real seer is he alone who has seen the seated one wandering around and the wanderer staying in one place? How can the duty that one has to perform be determined? Is it not determined simply by doing it? And, if this is true, I have conquered the world as I never ask anyone to do what I do not do myself. I have no alternative before me but to tell the reader of the delusion of this "Juna Jogi". Others may not know this, but the gentleman in question certainly knows that I have no such attendants who would hold back from me any letter, such as this one, which has been written in a friendly spirit. I received this letter promptly. Who is, however, to blame for my inability to reply to it for two months—those poor attendants, myself, fate, or the writer himself? Let us conclude that the writer himself is to blame. A person who writes to me a letter which puts me into an extremely difficult dilemma, should certainly have the patience to wait for a reply. The problem that he has posed is not so simple that I could solve it instantly as I could point out that cloth made of mill-spun yarn is not khadi. I was certainly afraid that, by replying to such a letter, I might impair the glory of *Ramanama*. Hence, I still feel that there was nothing wrong in not replying to it, and perhaps there is some delusion in this reply! However, even if there is, I place this reply at the feet of Rama in the same way as I would some meritorious deed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-11-1925

242. *MY NOTES*

Railway Travel

There was a time when I actually experienced the discomforts of a railway journey and then I also felt strongly about them; those days are over for me. I now get little first-hand experience of them, as I no longer travel third class. One does not take notice of what one does not constantly experience. Moreover, other matters, which appear to be more important to my mind, occupy all my time; hence it rarely occurs to me to write on the hardships of passengers or to investigate this matter. During

my tour of Kutch, however, Shri Jivraj Nensey reminded me that a day had been set apart every year for recalling passengers' grievances and he then asked me to write something on this subject. A day should thus be set apart and passengers should recall their grievances on that day. Ways should be found to remedy these, and new measures should be devised only after those taken during the previous year have been reviewed. Here, however, as on every question there are two aspects. It is not only the authorities who are to blame for the hardships that the passengers have to undergo. It has been my experience that much of the blame has to be shared by the latter also. What could the railway authorities do if the passengers make no complaints or do not know they have any rights? Or, how can we blame the railway authorities when the passengers themselves are responsible for committing offences? Hence, I expect some self-examination to take place when such gatherings are held. It is all very well to find fault with others, but along with that one should also look at one's own faults. If we do not get rid of some of our bad habits, many of the hardships suffered by passengers will continue, however good the railway regulations and however honest the authorities may be. Moreover, some grievances have their origin in the entire system of Government being evil; these cannot be done away with so long as the system is not changed. For instance, the basic objective of the railways is not to serve passengers but to drain the wealth of India and also to suppress any revolt that we may raise. In other words, the railway is meant for the military authorities. The hardships result from this which is the very root of the problem. Swaraj is the only remedy for it; and swaraj should be a government based on morality. In this manner, in calling to memory the hardships of passengers, we find that there are three aspects of the question which should be considered and I hope the organizers will consider them all.

To Spinners

I have received the following letter[1] from the Spinners' Association:

The only comment to be made on this is that as members of the Association try to understand the suggestions and act accordingly, the Association will gain not only in strength but also in wealth. There should be one price for bad yarn and another for good yarn. The effort put in by the spinner for both

[1] Not translated here

the types is almost the same. Moreover, the quality of the yarn is a test of the spinner. Good yarn implies that the cost of weaving will be lower. Yarn packed well is well protected. Following the suggestions will save the time of those in charge. In this way, a small amount of effort can automatically bring in financial gain to the Spinners' Association beyond one's guess. Regarding the last suggestion in the above letter, it is sufficient to say that although there may be no 'D' class for members, even if those who have not become total converts to khadi spin and send in their yarn there is some gain, at any rate. The Spinners' Association does not exist merely in name; it is there for concrete work. Hence there is merit in everyone trying to further its cause to the best of their ability and in any manner they can think of.

Some Replies

Several lovers of khadi have asked questions to which I give below the answers. The questions can be inferred from the answers.

1. Receipts for yarn will either continue being sent to the members individually or through newspapers or otherwise.
2. 'A' class members can send in their yarn every month. They can even send in a year's quota at one and the same time. Such persons cannot be regarded as members when their contribution is in arrears for a month; however, when they make up their arrears and also send in advance their quota for the future, they would again be treated as members.
3. One certainly cannot use mill-made slivers for spinning.
4. The Association began its year in October. Those who have already contributed fourteen thousand yards to the Congress, will continue to be its members. With effect from October, however, new yarn should be sent in to the Spinners' Association.

Indians in South Africa

The kind-hearted Mr. Andrews is always present wherever there is suffering. He reached Orissa, on hearing of the suffering of the animals there. He shared the sufferings of the labourers of Bombay. He is now on his way to South Africa to share the miseries of the Indians there. One to whom service alone is dharma finds happiness only in service. If the Indians in South Africa wish to take full advantage of the service of this kind-hearted Englishman, they should bear two things in mind. When someone comes forward to help, we sometimes become slack,

assuming that he will do single-handed all that needs to be done; this should not happen in South Africa. His visit can be utilized only if his presence makes them more alert and makes them put in greater effort. Secondly, they must unite, forget all differences and work with courage and determination. And if this is done, the game is not yet lost. Before resorting to satyagraha, they must give full thought to it. Satyagraha can never be practised as a threat. Those who strive for truth must speak the truth alone and act only truthfully. Not to resort to satyagraha would bring no disgrace; but, not practising it after resolving to do so will not only bring disgrace but is also likely to harm the community.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-11-1925

243. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

Monday [November 16, 1925][1]

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

Your commandments are being carried out. The wire[2] went to Sarojini this morning. I am giving a leading article to your mission.[3]

I hope you are quite well. God keep you well on the voyage.

With deepest love,

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2632

[1] C. F. Andrews left for South Africa a few days before the official deputation, which left on November 25. This as well as the reference to the leading article in *Young India* would indicate that the letter was written on November 16, which was a Monday.

[2] Not available

[3] *Vide* Vol. XXIX, "Indians in South Africa", 26-11-1925.

244. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[*November 18, 1925*][1]

I am worried after reading the letter about your health. First I thought of sending Mahadev or Devdas. Then I remembered Nargisbehn. She is bringing this letter. Tell her everything. She will, of course, wire to me her own opinion. But do tell her everything in detail. Ask her to send me a wire if you need even the least help, so that I can send Mahadev or Devdas from here. You must take rest. Ba sends her blessings.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi p. 81

245. NOTES

The Naked Truth

> We did not conquer India for the benefit of the Indians. I know it is said at missionary meetings that we conquered India to raise the level of the Indians. That is cant. We conquered India as the outlet for the goods of Great Britain. We conquered India by the sword and by the sword we should hold it. ("Shame!") Call shame if you like. I am stating facts. I am interested in missionary work in India and have done much work of that kind, but I am not such a hypocrite as to say we hold India for the Indians. We hold it as the finest outlet for British goods in general, and for Lancashire cotton goods in particular.

This is reported to have been said by Sir William Johnson-Hicks. But he is not the first minister to have reminded us of our serfdom. Why should truth be at all unpalatable? It must do us good to know ourselves as we are—destined to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the benefit of whosoever will claim us by the prowess of his sword. It is good, too, that due emphasis is laid on Lancashire goods. The sword will be sheathed as soon as Manchester calico ceases to be saleable in India. It is much more economical, expeditious and possible to give up the use of Manchester and, therefore, foreign calico than to blunt

[1] As in the source

the edge of Sir William's sword. The process will multiply the number of swords and, therefore, also miseries in the world. Like opium production, the world manufacture of swords needs to be restricted. The sword is probably responsible for more misery in the world than opium. Hence do I say that, if India takes to the spinning-wheel, she will contribute to the restriction of armament and peace of the world as no other country and nothing else can.

Government Servants and A.I.S.A.

A Government servant writes to say that he has been a habitual khaddar-wearer for the last four years, and his khaddar is made out of yarn of his own spinning. He is a regular spinner; but, being a Government servant, has not hitherto belonged to any association. He now enquires whether, the A.I.S.A. being, as its preamble shows, non-political in character, he may become its member. I am certainly of opinion that even the Viceroy can become a member of the Association with perfect impunity if he approves of its objects. Unless, therefore, there is anything in the rules of Government service debarring Government servants from becoming members of any association whatsoever although non-political, no Government servant who is in sympathy with A.I.S.A. should hesitate to become its member. The same correspondent asks whether it is obligatory to spin half an hour daily or whether a member may finish the whole quota as soon as he can. According to the constitution of the Association, it is open to anyone to send the whole of his annual subscription of twelve thousand yards at once. It is not obligatory to spin daily. But it is certainly advisable to do so even though one may have finished his quota.

Passengers' Day

It is a good idea to observe a Passengers' Day and review the progress of improvement in the condition of millions of passengers who use either the railways or the waterways connecting one part of India with another. In my palmy days when I enjoyed the privilege of travelling 3rd class I used to have much to say about the condition of 3rd-class passengers whether by rail or water.[1] But, on the principle of 'out of sight out of mind', not experiencing in my own person the difficulties of 3rd-class railway travelling, I have ceased to write upon it. But the forth-

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIII, pp. 284-7, 547-51; Vol. XIV, pp. 45-6.

coming Passengers' Day reminds one of one's duty towards the dumb millions who are packed like sardines in ill-constructed, dirty compartments and whose wants nobody ever cares to look after. The difficulties due to the indifference of railway authorities are however one part of the distress. It would be well to lay stress upon that part; but the indifference and ignorance of the passengers themselves are almost equally responsible for their difficulties. The speakers, therefore, at the meetings that would be held in different parts of the country would do well to emphasize the duty of passengers towards themselves. Our insanitary habits, want of consideration for our neighbours, insistence upon getting into overcrowded compartments and a host of other bad habits must be removed before 3rd-class railway travelling can be made bearable. It requires great vigilance and there is risk of an association that deals with the internal aspect of the question even courting unpopularity in the initial stages. I wish every success to the effort of Mr. Jivraj Nensey and his fellow organizers.

'Low Moral Tone'?

A correspondent writes:

> I am myself a Hindu and belong to the highest Brahmin class. But I belong to the advanced party. I believe in Reason, for Reason is God and God is Reason. The philosophy of the Hindus which emphasizes the *Soham*—I am He—doctrine has today built up a barrier which is more impenetrable than the Mt. Everest. The religion that built up its shrine on Mind-Purity is so obscured by the weed growths of ritualism that the real light is hidden from view. The culture that emphasized 'universal brotherhood under the fatherhood of God' stands today for the trading of the millions by Brahma's offspring who have nothing in common but the archaic mythological derivation from the common stock. The ahimsa doctrine has made us sneaking, snivelling cowards. A Hindu never plays fair with a Hindu; a Mohammedan plays fair with a Mohammedan and so does a Christian with a Christian. A Hindu is more tolerant of other customs outside the Hindu fold—another instance of downright cowardice—a Mohammedan is never tolerant and a Christian seldom. Shall educated Hindus continue this game of humbuggism or by taking up arms end it?

I can throw little light on what the correspondent says but I can advise. Reform must begin with ourselves. 'Physician heal thyself' is a sound doctrine. Those who realize the lowness of the moral tone and the presence of cowardice among Hindus may at least begin with themselves. The truth of the charge

may be generally admitted though not without reservations. But will resort to arms end the evil? How is the low moral tone to be remedied by the brandishing of the sword? Can the innumerable sub-castes or untouchability or the often meaningless ritual be removed by force? Will it not be introducing religion by compulsion? If God is reason, then the appeal must be not to the sword but to reason.

Or does the writer refer to the Hindu-Muslim tension and want the Hindus to resort to force of arms? On a close examination, it will be discovered that in a vast majority of cases, resort to arms is not only not necessary but harmful. What is wanted is the art of suffering. I hold that it is not ahimsa that has made of us cowards but the loss of it. Surely it is not ahimsa that makes us wish ill to people that oppose us but our utter ignorance of it. Those who do not take up arms refrain not because they are deterred by any notion of ahimsa but because they are afraid to die. I have often wished that those who have no scruples about arms will dare to take them up. Then shall we be free of the burden of so-called ahimsaists who being afraid of injury seek to cover their cowardice under the name of ahimsa and corrupt the greatest truth of life. The same may be said of *Soham*. It is a scientific truth which we belie in our treatment of the untouchables. The charges recited in the last paragraph cannot be sustained. What is true of Hindus is also largely true of the other sects. Human nature works in the same manner in the same circumstances. Is a Mussalman never tolerant? I see hundreds in my peregrinations who are as tolerant as Hindus. I have seen Christians, too, not seldom but frequently tolerant. The writer will also find upon observation that those who are intolerant towards other sects are no less intolerant among themselves.

A Brahmo Prayer

Here is a letter from a Brahmo friend:

> I am glad to see that your attention was drawn by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore to the great offence that you had unknowingly given to the Brahmo Samaj a few years ago by calling Raja Rammohan Roy a pigmy. Now that you have explained[1] under what circumstances you had used that expression and how high is your admiration for the great founder of the Brahmo Samaj, I hope my Brahmo friends in Bengal and elsewhere will with equal magnanimity of mind accept your explanation and join you in your spiritual and social work which, if rightly understood, is the mis-

[1] *Vide* "The Poet and the Charkha", 5-11-1925.

sion of the Brahmo Samaj. Your faith in prayer and simplicity of life, your insistence on using reason in interpreting Shastras, your love for Truth from all quarters, your reverence for great prophets like Christ, Buddha and Mohammed, your work for communal unity, the removal of untouchability and for temperance, —have already won for you the respect and admiration of many individual Brahmos. I hope and trust that now that you have removed the misunderstanding, the Brahmo Samaj will welcome your efforts for the regeneration of our motherland in matters spiritual and social. May this understanding bear good fruit under Divine Providence is my humble prayer.

Whilst I join the prayer, let me point out that I never called the great Raja a pigmy in the absolute sense. I have looked up the old file of *Young India*. The issue of 13-4-21 sets forth the circumstances under which I used the expression and the speech reads better even than I had recollections of it.[1] Nor have I ever known that the Brahmos have held aloof from participation in my activities any more than the others or that they have kept aloof because of my reference to the great reformer in my Cuttack speech. In any event if any have, I hope and pray that they will now respond. I note in the Brahmo friend's letter a conspicuous omission. The greatest of my activities is the charkha. I hold it to be the best part of my service—social, political and spiritual. For it includes these branches of service. My invitation to all to spin if only for half an hour daily for the sake of the starving millions of this land makes the movement at once both political and spiritual. Let the writer and the other Brahmo friends, therefore, take note of the little wheel and its product khaddar.

Tree Protection

All religion is presumably in response to the human aspiration or need. Religion is some irresistible binding force. The cow was a peremptory need and we had cow-protection in India. Digging of wells where water is scarce is a religion. It would be ludicrous to dig wells where the water supply is inexhaustible. Similarly whilst tree plantation would be superfluous in, say, Travancore, in some parts of India it is a religious necessity. Such a place is undoubtedly Cutch. It has a beautiful climate but some parts threaten to be a desolate waste unless there is proper rainfall in them. Rainfall can be almost regulated by deforestation or afforestation. Cutch needs conservation of every tree

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 476-8.

and every shrub. The most pleasant function therefore that I was required to perform in Cutch was the planting of these trees and inauguration of a tree planting and protection society. The enterprise was due to the genius of one man. His name is Jaykrishna Indrajit. Gujarat has very few specialists. Of these Sjt. Jaykrishna is among the most distinguished. He is a lover of plant life. He is the author of an accurate work on the fauna and flora of the Barda hills in the Porbunder State. He is now forest officer in Cutch and is trying to interest the people of Cutch and the State in forestry. He believes that with judicious plantation Cutch can be turned into a land flowing with milk and honey. He is of opinion, and I venture to share his belief, that the parts which the wind ruins by turning them into sand heaps can be turned into gardens if its inhabitants will pledge themselves each to plant and rear so many trees per year as they buy and keep cows. Whether all the alluring promises which he makes can be realized or not, there is no doubt that Cutch needs tree plantations on a large scale. It is wicked waste to destroy a single tree in Cutch for firewood. The State should import all the firewood or coal that it may need. It should be criminal to cut down a single tree in a place like Cutch. I hope, therefore, that the society established in Mandvi will open branches all over Cutch and, by co-operation between the people and the State, it is possible to cover the land with thousands of trees within a short time. At little expense the inhabitants of Cutch can make an immense addition to its wealth and beauty. They have a capable enthusiast to guide them. Will they have the sense and the energy to follow his guidance?

What is true of Cutch is almost equally true of Kathiawar. This land of immense possibilities is cut up into small States, each possessing sovereign powers with more or less limitations. There is little or no co-ordination between them. The people, therefore, in this little compact peninsula, though having everything else in common, are governed by different heads under different laws. The conservation of forests, systematic plantation of trees, irrigation and many other things cannot be properly done without a common policy. I reproduced some time ago the opinion of Mr. Elmshurst that, if the chiefs and the people of Kathiawar did not evolve and follow a common policy of tree plantation, Kathiawar was likely to suffer from a water famine of such magnitude as to make life impossible in that land of fine soldiers that once were. In Cutch, Kathiawar, Rajputana, Sind and such other places a study of practical botany should be com-

pulsory in all schools. And the princes can do worse than encourage in every possible way the habit of planting and rearing trees.

ALL-INDIA DESHBANDHU MEMORIAL

Here is the twelfth press list of All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund:

	Rs.	As.	Ps.
Already acknowledged	66,443	6	6
Part of Cutch collections	8,250	0	0
	74,693	6	6

More has been collected in Cutch, but it has not yet reached the treasurer. But adding the balance of Cutch collections does not mean much. I would remind workers that they should not be remiss in their zeal for collections. It is not proper for those who are to pay to wait for me to tour in their province before they would pay. All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund must be worthy of that friend of the people and of the cause to which it is to be devoted. Khadi cannot be organized all over India, if we do not have enough funds. Let the reader remember that every rupee means honest work for at least eight needy toilers of India.

At the meeting of the Council of All-India Spinners' Association which met for five days, for want of funds the Council had to decide that no new applications for grants of loans should be entertained till sufficient funds had been collected. The pending applications had to be considered in anticipation of funds. If, therefore, khadi work must be thoroughly organized, khadi lovers must collect without delay.

ALL-INDIA COW-PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

The Secretary has handed me the following list of yarn subscriptions received to date from members:

No.	Name		Yds.
	BOMBAY 4		
1.	Divalibai Jhaverdas		8,000
2.	Jamnadas Gandabhai		4,000
3.	K. D. Lele		8,000
4.	Shankarlal Gupta		20,000
	C. P. (MARATHI)		
5.	Jamnalal Bajaj	Wardha	4,000

GUJARAT 4

6.	M. K. Gandhi	Sabarmati	6,375
7.	Kalyanji Narottam	Kotda	24,000
8.	Chhaganlal Shivlal	Dahod	8,000
9.	Maganlal K. Gandhi	Sabarmati	3,000

MAHARASHTRA 20

10.	Yamutai Parvate	Wai.	4,000
11.	Parvatibai Chitnis	,,	4,000
12.	Yashodabai Bapat	,,	4,000
13.	Sarasvatibai Bapat	,,	4,000
14.	Anandibai Thatte	,,	2,000
15.	Venubai Bapaye	,,	4,000
16.	Bhagirathibai Bapaye	,,	4,000
17.	Gangabai Godbole	,,	4,000
18.	Parvatibai Sathe	,,	4,000
19.	Avantikabai Sathe	,,	2,000
20.	Venubai Bhave	,,	2,000
21.	Indirabai Marathe	,,	4,000
22.	Vyankatacharya Vale	,,	4,000
23.	Narayan Sadashiv Son	,,	6,000
24.	Manekbai Gujarbai	,,	2,000
25.	Durgatai Deshpande	,,	2,000
26.	Ramabai Tambe	Poona	24,000
27.	Radhabai Gokhale	,,	2,000
28.	S. B. Parulekar	,,	4,000
29.	S. S. Dole	Thana	2,000

YARN AS DONATIONS

Bharata Govardhana Mandala & Co., through Sr. M. K. Joshi, Belgaum	19,500

I publish the list by way of encouragement to others to become spinning members of the Association. A list from Wai is due to the effort of Chaunde Maharaj of Goverdhan Sanstha. I hope at an early date to publish the list of cash subscriptions. Greater support to the Association is necessary if it is to do its work efficiently.

Young India, 19-11-1925

246. OUR INSANITATION

During my wanderings nothing has been so painful to me as to observe our insanitation throughout the length and breadth of the land. I do not believe in the use of force for carrying out reforms, but when I think of the time that must elapse before the ingrained habits of millions of people can be changed, I almost reconcile myself to compulsion in this the most important matter of insanitation. Several diseases can be directly traced to insanitation. Hookworm, for instance, is such a direct result. Not a single human being who observes the elementary principles of sanitation need suffer from hookworm. The disease is not even due to poverty. The only reason is gross ignorance of the first principles of sanitation.

These reflections arise from the abominations I saw in Mandvi. The people of Mandvi are not poor. They cannot be classed as ignorant. And yet their habits are dirty beyond description. Men and women dirty the streets that they walk on with bare feet. They do this every morning. There is practically no such thing as a closet in that port. It was with the greatest difficulty that I was able to pass through these streets.

Let me not be hard on the poor inhabitants of Mandvi. I know that I saw nothing better in many streets of Madras. The sight of grown-up people lining the river banks and, after the performance, proceeding with criminal thoughtlessness to the river and cleaning themselves in it and injecting into its sacred water typhoid, cholera and dysentery germs has not yet faded from memory. This is the water that is used also for drinking. In the Punjab we violate God's laws by dirtying our roofs and breeding millions of flies. In Bengal the same tank quenches the thirst of man and beast and cleanses him and his pots. But I must not continue this description of our shame. Seeing that it is there, it would be sinful to hide it. But I dare not carry it any further. I know I have underdrawn the picture.

I would urge the enterprising people of Mandvi to lead the way in model sanitation. Let them, whether the State help them or not, call in a specialist and spend money in improving their sanitation so as to make it perfect. 'Cleanliness is next to godliness.' We can no more gain God's blessings with an unclean body than with an unclean mind. A clean body cannot reside in an unclean city.

Let us not put off everything till swaraj is attained and thus put off swaraj itself. Swaraj can be had only by brave and clean people. Whilst the Government has to answer for a lot, I know that the British officers are not responsible for our insanitation. Indeed if we gave them free scope in this matter, they would improve our habits at the point of the sword. They do not do so because it does not pay. But they would gladly welcome and encourage any effort towards improved sanitation. In this matter Europe has much to teach us. We quote with pride a few texts from Manu or, if we are Mussalmans, from the *Quran*. We do not carry even these into practice. Europeans have deduced an elaborate code of sanitation from the principles laid down in these books. Let us learn these from them and adapt them to our needs and habits. How I would love to see not ornamental but useful sanitary associations whose members will deem it a privilege to take up the broom, the shovel and the bucket. Here is great national work for schoolboys, schoolgirls and collegiates all over India.

Young India, 19-11-1925

247. A TRUE CONGRESSMAN

(i)

You do not know what we (Congressmen) are. I will tell you. One well-known Congressman went to a comfortable house. He was not invited there. He had not written either to the owner. On reaching there he was asked by the owner: "Where are you going to stay?" This Congressman said, "Here of course, where else do you think?" The owner was unprepared for this favour. But he had to make the best of the job though he never omitted to speak about the meanness of this guest who had imposed himself upon him. He even made opportunities for delicately insulting this Congressman who was too far gone to notice the insults. I must tell you that the unwilling host was not a Congressman.

(ii)

Another Congressman imposed himself on a Congress worker without notice. He had a large company with him and felt mightily offended when he could not get all the convenience that he had expected. We Congressmen have come to think so much of ourselves that we presume we have a right to demand and receive the best service without the least cost.

These incidents were related to me by an earnest Congress worker with so much pain that I thought I should place them on record and draw a moral from them. Let no one, however, wear the cap unless it fits him. The incidents have been purposely defaced. I do not know the other side. No one, therefore, need waste his time in a vain effort to identify them.

The thing is to avoid copying examples quoted. A Congressman to be true must be above suspicion. Let him remember that he is out to gain swaraj by "legitimate and peaceful means". We have been a long time getting it. The obvious inference is that we have not at all adopted even in our mutual intercourse means that can bear scrutiny. Indeed, a correspondent once suggested that, whilst we must be truthful and peaceful towards opponents, we need not be that in our mutual dealings. But experience shows that we cannot be truthful and peaceful on some occasions and for some people only, if we are not so on all occasions. And if we will not be considerate towards one another, we shall not be considerate to the world outside. All the prestige acquired by the Congress will be gone if we are not scrupulously clean in our dealings within or without in every detail. Pounds will take care of themselves if we could but take care of the pennies.

A true Congressman is a true servant. He ever gives, never wants service. He is easily satisfied so long as his own comfort is concerned. He is always content to take a back seat. He is never communal or provincial. His country is his paramount consideration. He is brave to a fault because he has shed all earthly ambition, fear of Death himself. And he is generous because he is brave, forgiving because he is humble and conscious of his own failings and limitations.

If such Congressmen are rare, swaraj is far off and we must revise our creed. The fact that we have not got swaraj as yet is proof presumptive that we have not as many true Congressmen as we want. Be that however as it may, if I have placed on record the ugly incidents which can be multiplied, I must bear grateful testimony to the fact that there are nameless Congressmen, no doubt few today, but daily growing in number, who fulfil all the tests I have mentioned. They are unknown to fame. It is well that they are. Work would be impossible if they wanted to shine in the limelight and expected honourable mention in Congress dispatches. Those who obtain even Victoria Crosses are by no means and necessarily always the bravest humanitarians. To the end of time the real heroes of the world will be never known. Their deeds remain imperishable. They are their own

reward. Such men are the real scavengers without whom the earth will be a plague spot not worth living in. It has been my lot to meet such men and women in the Congress ranks. But for them the Congress will not be an institution to which it would be a pride to belong. There is no doubt at the present moment a hunt for offices and an unhealthy competition to capture the Congress. It is a disease which has come to the surface and it is bound to give place in the course of time to health. That will not happen if the Congress becomes anything but an institution for hard, honest and selfless toil.

Let the Congress be ever so democratic, but democracy must not be brag and bluster, a passport to receiving service from people. If *Vox populi* is to be *Vox dei*, it must be the voice of honesty, bravery, gentleness, humility and complete self-sacrifice. A woman[1] is to guide the Congress next year. Woman is nothing if she is not self-sacrifice and purity personified. Let us men and women of the Congress humble ourselves, purify our hearts and be worthy representatives of the dumb millions.

Young India, 19-11-1925

248. A CRY FROM GERMANY

Bora Dada[2] has received a letter from Germany from which I take the following:

> Corruption cries to the sky. All bad men live in wealth but all good men have a hard struggle to fight out; the poorest of all are we town clerks, for our salary is very small, 35 dollars a month, and so is our life a perpetual starvation.
>
> I often desire fervently to come and see India, to sit at the feet of Mr. Gandhi. I am quite alone. I have neither wife nor children. A poor sick niece who has none but me keeps my house. I should become a priest, if there was not my poor niece. I cannot leave her in misery. However I am an academician. I have studied classical and modern foreign languages. I have also studied Mysticism and Buddhism. I cannot find a better place nor a better salary. That is so in the Germany of today.
>
> Before the terrible War 15 years ago I was an independent man, an investigator; now, after the terrible decline in value of our money-standard, I am a beggar like a thousand other learned men in Germany.

[1] Sarojini Naidu

[2] Dwijendra Nath Tagore

> Now I am 45 years old and you cannot think how desperate and hopeless I am, what a great disgust I feel in Europe. Here the men have no soul and are wild beasts who devour one another. Could I go to India? Could I become an Indian philosopher? I believe in India and I hope India will save us.

The opening lines of this letter might well have been written by any Indian clerk. His position is no better than the German clerk's. In India too "bad men live in wealth and good men have a hard struggle to fight out." It is therefore a case of distance lending enchantment to the view. Friends like this German writer must be warned against regarding India as better than Germany or any other country. Let him realize that riches are no test of goodness. Indeed poverty often is the only test. A good man voluntarily embraces poverty. If the writer was at one time in affluent circumstances, Germany was at that time exploiting other countries. The remedy lies with every individual in every country. Each one has to find his peace from within. And peace to be real must be unaffected by outside circumstances. The writer says that, but for his poor niece, he might have become a priest. This seems to me to be a distorted view. It would almost appear that the writer's present state is somewhat better than that of a priest of his imagination. For now he has at least one poor person to look after. Under the priestly licence, he would have none to look after! The fact, however, is that as a true priest he would have hundreds of nieces and even nephews to look after. As a priest the sphere of his responsibility would be as wide as that of the universe. Whereas now he slaves for himself and his niece, as a priest he would be expected to slave for the whole of distressed mankind. I would then venture to advice this friend and others like him without adopting the clerical robe to identify themselves with all in distress. They would then have all the advantages of the priestly calling without being exposed to its terrible temptations.

The German friend would like to become an Indian philosopher. I assure him that there are no territorial distinctions in philosophy. An Indian philosopher is as good or as bad as a European philosopher.

One thing the writer, in my opinion, has guessed somewhat correctly. Though India has her share of wild and soulless two-footed beasts, probably the tendency of the average Indian mind is to discard the wild beast in it. And it is my certain conviction that, if India retains the way she chose in 1921, Europe has reason to hope much from India. She chose then

with the greatest deliberation the way of truth and peace and symbolized it in her acceptance of the charkha and non-co-operation with all that was evil. From all I know of her, she has not yet rejected it and is not likely to.

Young India, 19-11-1925

249. SPINNING IN AMERICA

A friend has sent me a cutting from an American newspaper published in New London whose name I cannot trace on the cutting. It contains a bright article by Cassie Hardwick on the spinning-wheel. It shows the hold it had upon the Americans during the War of Independence and how according to the writer the spinning-wheel contributed to success. The chief interest however consists for the reader in the fact that even in America there is a revival of the old art. I give below some of the interesting extracts:[1]

Young India, 19-11-1925

250. SOCIAL CO-OPERATION

I offer no apology to the reader for publishing in this issue Dr. Hariprasad's second letter on Ahmedabad Municipality. By and large, I do not waste the time of readers of *Navajivan* by discussing matters relating to a particular city or village. I utilize it for dealing with matters that concern the whole of Gujarat or the whole of India. And the space that I am taking up now in *Navajivan* to describe the lanes of Ahmedabad is justified by the rule that what holds good of one place holds good of all places. For the insanitary conditions we see in Ahmedabad and the bad habits that cause these conditions are found all over India. If people are trained to adopt sanitary habits even in a single town and if we could make the place a model in this respect, it would be easier to bring about sanitary conditions at all other places through such training.

Our carelessness and lack of social co-operation are responsible for the terribly insanitary conditions that prevail amongst us. In those spheres where non-co-operation is called for, either cons-

[1] *Vide* Appendix VII.

ciously or unconsciously, we practise co-operation; for instance, we co-operate with many of our bad habits; we co-operate with the administrative machinery of the Government, knowing that it is destroying the nation's vitality; we co-operate with our insanitary conditions which sap our physical strength and make us victims of plague and such other diseases. However, we fail to co-operate with our neighbours in whose happiness lies our own happiness and whose convenience we should consult, in everything we do. There is a legal maxim which is not meant to foster barren legal arguments but which suggests a religious principle: "Use your property in such a manner that it does no harm to others." The *Gita* says this very thing in another way. "He alone can be called a seer, he alone can be called learned, who sees himself in others and others in himself." At every step we violate this basic principle of non-violence which is universally applicable and is at the same time the noblest of all. This violation in the case of our carelessness with regard to performing our excretary functions has moreover dangerous consequences.

How much carelessness is involved in my throwing the rubbish collected from my compound into that of my neighbour's or in throwing bits of glass out of my window, in throwing rubbish, in pouring out water and in spitting out of my window with total disregard of those who walk down below? What a great deal of violence is involved in all this! What a barbarous non-co-operation with society! What thoughtlessness in being indifferent to the fact that water from my drain could do harm to others! If we only realize that the public is a part of us and that we in turn are a part of it, our insanitary conditions would become an impossibility and by freeing ourselves of diseases, etc., we would add to the nation's strength and even its wealth. A writer has said that dirt is matter misplaced. The sand which covers the river banks adds to the beauty of nature and the welfare of human beings; that very sand becomes dust if a particle of it gets into one's eyes; if it falls into food, the food becomes unfit for consumption. Human excreta, if thrown on the road on which one has to walk, becomes filth, gives out an offensive odour and becomes the root cause of many diseases; while the same substance, buried in the field, serves as manure which is as good as gold. Farmers collect it and willingly pay a price for it. The same may be said of all other things. In these circumstances, if society is taught the ordinary rules to be observed with regard to one's excretary functions and, if it acts in accordance with these, it would result in social co-operation and the

human excreta, now regarded as filth, could be carried over by us to fields and transformed into golden manure.

This task cannot be accomplished by Dr. Hariprasad alone. Nor can a handful of persons do it. The help of the entire soci t is required for this purpose and this could be obtained in two ways. One way is to frame strict rules and enforce them, while the other is to explain the facts to people, create interest in such work and persuade them voluntarily to make improvements.

The four instances quoted by Dr. Hariprasad are worthy of emulation. Some persons belonging to the wealthy class seem to hold the view that they can be happy and well-protected if only they build marble palaces worth lakhs of rupees and then raise hedges all round them. In fact, if there is dirt in the surrounding area, they will have built for themselves a prison of marble instead of mud, they will be surrounded by several foul odours and exposed to several diseases. If they spend on training people in removing dirt and maintaining the purity of the atmosphere, half of what they spend on palaces, they would get the full benefit of their own palaces and also benefit others. In this manner they would secure a happy blending of self-interest and benevolence.

In my opinion, the removal of insanitary conditions in a city like Ahmedabad is not possible through increase in taxation alone. Some increase may perhaps be necessary to meet the expenses on sanitation; however, this can be brought about in a large measure only through the philanthropy of rich persons. Could we not have small children's parks in every locality in Ahmedabad? Could not the roads be broadened? Could not the by-lanes be kept so clean that we may, without any hesitation, walk in them barefoot?

All these improvements are only possible if there is co-operation between the wealthy class and the poor, that is, if there is social co-operation between all citizens and if the rich regard the entire city as their own and spend their riches on beautifying it. They should also realize that wealth spent in this way begets wealth. If a good road is constructed in a city, the value of the buildings appreciates. Similarly, if the roads in Ahmedabad are widened and kept clean the adjoining land will rise in value. In addition to this, there is an economic gain which follows from improved health of the people and the resulting increase in their vitality and their life-span. A beginning has to be made, just now, with keeping clean the roads that we already have. This beginning will finally result in the widening of narrow roads, in the making of small parks in various

localities and in beautifying the city by bringing into view the temples and mosques now surrounded by ugly buildings.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-11-1925

251. REMINISCENCES OF KUTCH [—II]

TREE-PRESERVATION AND PLANTING

Among the questions I had to consider during my tour of Kutch, one was that of planting trees and protecting them. In some respects, Kutch may be regarded as a part of Sind. The latter however can subsist because it has the advantage of the Indus flowing through it. Had it not been for this river, Sind would have been ruined. Kutch enjoys the advantage of no such river. Hence few trees are found in Kutch, barring a few places like Anjar and Mundra. And the rainfall is low wherever there is no vegetation. Such is the plight of Kutch. The rainfall is so slight and irregular that almost every year there is a famine there. The shortage of water is perpetual. If trees are planted in Kutch regularly and diligently, the rainfall there can be increased and the land made more fertile. Shri Jaykrishna Indrajit is making great efforts in this direction. He made me plant a tree in a lovely open space at some distance from Mandvi. This was, I feel, the most pleasant function I performed in Kutch. On that very day, a society for the protection of trees was also founded there. The purpose for which this society was founded, the purpose with which I was made to plant trees, will, I hope, be crowned with success.

Shri Jaykrishna Indrajit is a gem of Gujarat. There are only a few in Gujarat who are engrossed in their own field of activity. Shri Jayakrishna Indrajit enjoys a pride of place among such leading persons. He knows each tree and each leaf in Barda. He has such great faith in planting trees that he accords it a place of prime importance. And he believes that a great deal can be achieved by these means. His enthusiasm and his faith in this matter are infectious. I have long ago been infected by these. Both the ruler and the subjects can, if they wish, take full advantage of the presence in their midst of such a wise man and raise a beautiful forest.

Johannesburg was a similar region. Nothing but grass grew there at one time. There was not a single building. Within

forty years this same place became a golden city. There was a time when people had to pay twelve annas for a single bucket of water and sometimes had to make do with soda-water. Sometimes they had to wash even their face and hands with the latter! Today, there is water there and there are trees also. From the very beginning, owners of gold mines converted the region into a relatively green belt and increased the amount of rainfall by enthusiastically bringing over saplings from far off places and planting them. There are other such instances also where the amount of rainfall has been reduced by deforestation and where it has been increased by afforestation.

A great deal of improvement can be brought about if the wealthy class in Kutch takes interest in this work which is a dharma for them. In such a region protection of trees is a dharma in the same way as cow-protection. The person who rears a cow is, we believe, rewarded for this meritorious deed. Similarly, in regions such as Kutch and Kathiawar, anyone who grows trees should be rewarded for this equally meritorious deed. Not a single tree should be cut down for use as fuel or for any other purpose. It is cheaper to import wood for fuel from other parts than to cut down trees in the vicinity for use as fuel. The person who cuts down a tree straightway gets fuel free of cost; but who can compensate Kutch for the harm caused to it by this action. It takes ten years or more for a tree to grow big enough to provide wood. How can one think of cutting down a tree on which ten years of labour has been spent and which affords protection to the soil and man in various ways?

In Kathiawar the situation is almost the same as in Kutch, and the problem of tree-preservation is becoming increasingly important. However, the problem here is more difficult, as Kathiawar, though a small and beautiful peninsula, is sub-divided into so many small States[1] which are independent of one another so that unless there is consensus of opinion among them on such matters, the task of planting trees or protecting them cannot be carried on in a systematic manner. Despite all this, Kutch and Kathiawar should, unless they wish to become barren tracts, immediately adopt drastic measures.

Insanitary Conditions in Mandvi

I was taken inside the city of Mandvi in order to give *darshan* on the very day on which I planted a tree at a clean spot in

[1] The number of the then Princely States in Kathiawar exceeded a hundred.

pleasant surroundings swept by a gentle breeze. The business of giving *darshan* became very distasteful to me because while doing so I got a glimpse of the insanitary conditions in Mandvi. In the early hours of the morning, when people should purify themselves and pray to God in a sacred atmosphere, aged men and women of Mandvi, as well as children, adorn its streets with their own filth. Here is no inhibition arising out of a sense of shame, no considerations of hygiene, no feeling of compassion for society. The citizens of Mandvi are not ignorant, they are not fools. They have gone round the world, been abroad, seen clean cities. One cannot understand how despite all this they do not hesitate to soil the streets on which they have to walk barefoot, on which their children always have to play and where they have sometimes to hold feasts. I am ashamed even to describe fully the insanitary conditions that prevail in Mandvi. The reader should imagine it for himself from what I have said. True, the horrible sight that I saw in Mandvi is also to be seen elsewhere. I recall having seen a similar sight in Porbunder in my childhood. Everywhere in this sacred land I have come across such insanitary conditions, such profound ignorance and gross violation of the rules governing the performance of the excretary functions and I have been pained by this.

However, even if the entire world commits a sin, that does not give us a right to commit it. Even so, the insanitary conditions in Mandvi cannot be excused on the ground that such conditions also prevail elsewhere. And because I regard it as part of my dharma of service to write of my reminiscences of Kutch and describe conditions just as I found them, I cannot refrain from putting down these painful recollections of Mandvi. What is true of Mandvi is also true of other towns and villages of Kutch. However, Mandvi is a port, the people there have presumably more courage and wisdom and they have wealth; hence they should be regarded as being more culpable. Whether the State gives any assistance or not, the people should immediately adopt the necessary sanitary measures for the city. With the help of experts in sanitation, citizens should construct private as well as public lavatories. The *mahajans* should take more interest in the removal of these insanitary conditions in Mandvi than they do in treating the untouchables with contempt. They should rather excommunicate those who violate the rules of sanitation and perform their natural functions outside the lavatories provided for the purpose or misuse the lavatories. By doing this, they can add to their own prestige. This is a work which can be done readily

and it does not involve any great expense. A little enthusiasm is all that is required. Time and again, Mandvi is gripped by the plague. It should be surprising if the plague did not break out in a place where mother earth is insulted so badly. The air of Mandvi is naturally so pure that no outbreak of plague or cholera can occur in that city. But we, of our own accord, pollute the air. The wise reader will understand without my saying it that keeping ourselves healthy is closely bound up with the abolition of untouchability.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-11-1925

252. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, AHMEDABAD

November 22, 1925

Mr. Gandhi opened this afternoon the Youth Week organized by the local students. Addressing the students, he said he was spared formal public functions whenever he came to Ahmedabad for taking rest, but when he was asked to open the Youth Week in place of Mr. Jayakar, who could not come owing to illness, he gladly consented. He was glad to hear that the students of the Government College and the National College had co-operated in organizing that function. He never expected them to hate one another. He was at present laying emphasis on the charkha but he would not do so before them. He would ask them during the Youth Week to clean the streets of Ahmedabad like the sweepers.[1]

He had been noticing a spirit of depression among them, and he wanted them to be optimistic. He expected of them sacrifice and self-control, without which their movement would be a failure. If their goal was dharmaraj, it would be impossible to attain it without sacrifice. Even if they got it without sacrifice they would not be able to retain it. If they really wanted to do work they should uplift themselves and the nation. He continued:

You can picket liquor shops quietly and advise drunkards in their houses, in these seven days, to refrain from drink, just like the Salvation Army. You must subject yourselves to introspection and come out like Ramachandra. Take a vow to cleanse your hearts, keeping God, and not Satan, as your witness, and make your life simple and easy. If you do these, you will have truly observed the Youth Week. May God give you that intellect and strength.

The Bombay Chronicle and *The Hindu*, 23-11-1925

[1] This is from *The Bombay Chronicle*. What follows has been taken from *The Hindu*.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

SWARAJ OR DEATH

In your *Young India* of the 25th June, I find things which I utterly fail to understand. On page 219 under the heading "On the Verge of It" you have, I think, asked your correspondent to explain—"Why do you think that we cannot spin and wear khaddar or remove untouchability or be friends with the Mussalmans till we get swaraj? How will the withdrawal of Englishmen help Hindus to trust the Mussalmans or *vice versa*, or open the eyes of blind orthodoxy and better the lot of the oppressed people or induce the idle to work the spinning-wheel and those whose tastes are degraded to revise them and revert to khaddar? Surely, if we cannot do these things now under the pressure of adversity, we are not likely to do them when we are lulled into a sense of false security by nominal swaraj. What is there to prevent us now from attempting or accomplishing all or any of these three things if it is not our own unwillingness, lethargy or worse?"

I cannot say what the correspondent will answer to these your queries but I respectfully like to point out to you that your assertion—that without khaddar, Hindu-Muslim unity and the removal of untouchability there can be no swaraj—also appears to be based on wrong premises. There appears to be some truth also in the alternative assertion of your correspondent, and in his support I say this:

(1) The spinning and use of khaddar will be wholly popularized only after the establishment of swaraj and not before. The reasons are as follows:

The Government is a part and parcel of every society. Everybody seeks its help every moment. For the time being life, honour and property of all individuals under the Government are entrusted to it. Some have to win cases, some to get titles and honours, some are to be provided with appointments and so on. Everybody can do without the Government help only for a fixed period of time and that only a small one, but nobody can do without it (the Government) for a longer period. Everywhere in the country, specially in my district, the use of khaddar is a symbol of anti-Government sentiment. It is regarded as the dress of the rebel. It may not have been enacted in any code of law, but in practice it is so. You must be knowing that, in this country, law is one thing and its administration is another. Everybody is afraid of incurring the displeasure of the Government side. How can it, viz., the use of khaddar with its antecedents be popular? The heroes and the soldiers alone will take it up, but not the masses. Thus the use of khaddar will not be popular before swaraj. In fact, the use of khaddar is a crime now. You may ask: How will the

people fight and overthrow this Government when they are so cowardly as not to use even khaddar? Mahatmaji, any great event takes place in the world only through divine agencies and the reasons are inexplicable to men. Overthrow of such a mighty Government will be effected really through divine agencies and outwardly through a great national excitement amounting to a temporary madness on the part of all or at least the majority of the Indian people. And everybody will afford during the great national excitement to be so mad, fearless and brave for some time for this purpose.

After swaraj it will be popular, for there will be no necessity of fear from the use of khaddar. Besides, the people will be encouraged to use it and they will also try to seek the favour of the nationalists forming the Government as we find in District Boards and Municipalities these days under nationalists. Above all, there will be a legislation declaring the use of foreign cloth as a crime, as every nation has done and is doing to encourage home industries.

(2) There can be no permanent Hindu-Muslim unity before swaraj. The reasons are as follows:

During my boyhood one of my paternal uncles told me a story which runs thus—"Once there were two young men who were fast friends. They appeared to have had two bodies but one soul. Their parents did not like it and were on the look-out to effect enmity between these friends. They proclaimed probably by a beat of drum a handsome reward to anyone successfully effecting a breach between the friends. One old woman popularly known as 'Kutni' undertook the task. She went to the friends and called only one of them apart from the other but within his (other friend's) sight. She took her mouth to the ears of the friend whom she had called apart, pretended to say something to him, said nothing and went away. The man returned to his friend who was left behind and was asked to state what the woman had told him. The poor man stated that she had said nothing. Suspicion naturally arose in the mind of the other man who saw so many performances with his own eyes and was in the dark as to their purposes and result, and it developed. In course of time their friendship came to an end and the woman got the reward."

Exactly in the same way, Mahatmaji, please do not expect perfect unity between the Hindus and Mussalmans so long as the third party, with not only all the available resources of the country but also with those of the whole British Empire and with a clear knowledge that its very existence depends only on the disunion and quarrel among the several races inhabiting this country, is always persistently trying every moment to keep the people fighting among themselves. You are too anxious for Hindu-Muslim unity as a road to swaraj but if you please think of it over and over again, I am sure you will arrive at a conclusion that the overthrow of this Government and establishment of swaraj in this country are the road to peace and unity among the several communities of the country and not the *vice versa*. Permanent unity is impossible before swaraj.

(3) Untouchability even cannot be removed before swaraj is established in this country. The reasons are as follows:

Anything and everything done for the good of the country is opposed by the present Government and at its insinuation by its native allies. The removal of untouchability is for the good of the country and hence it has been and will be thwarted by the Government. You are a reformer. Your followers in Travancore were so much harassed by the Government there at Vaikom. If you want that the untouchables be given certain rights and privileges in a certain Hindu temple, there will be a protest from the orthodox section of the Hindu community but is it not a fact that this Government comes and will come to help them against the untouchables? How can you succeed in this matter unless and until you remove this Government? At present, Mahatmaji, for any thing evil in this country this Government is alone responsible. You are supported in this your programme by the majority of the Indian people but it is not fulfilled only owing to the existence of this Government.

There is much truth in what you say in regard to your triple programme but I most respectfully suggest that the practical side of the human affair is certainly overlooked by you in a certain degree. The country and we, your soldiers, are faithfully carrying out your orders to the extent we can. But it is my prayer that you kindly think of swaraj first and of any other thing afterwards. Swaraj alone will solve all national troubles. You have already declared that if the people fail to complete the khaddar programme by the end of this year, you will give the country a programme by following which there will be either swaraj or death to all patriots. I think you remember it. Please make haste or everything will get dull. The time has almost arrived when you should publish your programme and call upon the nation either to win swaraj or to die.

Young India, 27-8-1925

APPENDIX II

A. I. C. C. RESOLUTIONS

The Franchise

A. In view of the fact that there is a demand from a considerable section in the Congress for a revision of the franchise and there is a general consensus of opinion that having regard to the present situation the franchise should be extended, the All-India Congress Committee resolves that Article VII of the Congress Constitution be repealed and replaced by the following:

Article VII. (i) Every person not disqualified under Article IV and paying a subscription of 4 annas per year in advance, or 2,000 yards of evenly spun yarn of his or her own spinning, shall be entitled to become a member

of any primary organization controlled by a Provincial Congress Committee, provided that no person shall be a member of two parallel Congress organizations at one and the same time.

(ii) The yarn subscription mentioned in sub-section (i) shall be sent direct by the spinner to the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, or to any person nominated by the Secretary in this behalf, and a certificate from the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, to the effect that he has received 2,000 yards of evenly spun yarn of the holders' own spinning as his or her yearly subscription, shall entitle the holder to the membership mentioned in sub-section (i) hereof, provided that for the purpose of checking the accuracy of the returns made by the All-India Spinners' Association, the A. I. C. C., or any P. C. C., or any Sub-Committee thereunder shall have the right to inspect the accounts, the stock and the vouchers of the All-India Spinners' Association or any subordinate organization thereunder and provided further that in the event of any inaccuracy or error discovered by the inspecting body in the accounts, stock or vouchers examined, the certificates issued by the All-India Spinners' Association in respect of persons with reference to whose membership the accounts have been examined, shall be declared cancelled; provided that the All-India Spinners' Association or the person disqualified shall have the right of appeal to the Working Committee. Any person wishing to spin for the membership of the Congress may, if he or she desires, be supplied, upon due security, with cotton for spinning.

(iii) The yarn of the membership shall be reckoned from the 1st January to 31st December and there shall be no reduction in the subscription to be paid by members joining in the middle of the year.

(iv) No person shall be entitled to vote at the election of representatives or delegates of any Committee or Sub-Committee or any Congress organization whatsoever or to be elected as such, or to take part in any meeting of the Congress or any Congress organization, or any Committee or Sub-Committee thereof, if he has not complied with sub-section (i) hereof or does not wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar at political and Congress functions or while engaged in Congress business; the Congress expects Congressmen to wear khaddar also on all other occasions and in no case shall they wear or use foreign cloth.

(v) All the existing members at the end of the year shall be entitled to remain such up to the 31st January following although they may not have paid their subscription for the new year.

Saving Clause: sub-section (i) shall not affect the rights of those who have been already registered as members under the Article repealed provided their membership is otherwise in order, and provided further that those who shall have paid yarn subscription, whether of self-spun or hand-spun yarn up to September 1925, shall remain members for the current year though they may not pay any further yarn.

B. Whereas the Congress in its 39th Session held at Belgaum endorsed an agreement entered into between Mahatma Gandhi on the one hand and Deshbandhu C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru acting on behalf of the Swaraj Party on the other, whereby the Congress activity was restricted to the constructive programme mentioned therein and it was provided that "the work in connection with the Central and Provincial Legislatures should be carried on by the Swaraj Party on behalf of the Congress and as an integral part of the Congress organization and that for such work the Swaraj Party should make its own rules and administer its own funds" and;

Whereas subsequent events have shown that this restriction should not continue under the altered circumstances that face the country and that the Congress should henceforth be a predominantly political body;

It is resolved that the Congress do now take up and carry on all such political work as may be necessary in the interest of the country and for this purpose do employ the whole of the machinery and funds of Congress, save and except such funds and assets as are specially earmarked and such funds and assets as belong to the All-India Khaddar Board and Provincial Khaddar Boards, which shall be handed over with all existing financial obligations to the All-India Spinners' Association to be started by Mahatma Gandhi as an integral part of the Congress organization, but with independent existence and full powers to administer these other funds for the fulfilment of its object;

Provided that the work in the Indian and Provincial Legislatures shall be carried on in accordance with the policy and programme laid down by the Swaraj Party under the constitution framed by the Party and the rules made thereunder subject to such modifications made by the Congress as may be found necessary from time to time for the purpose of carrying out the said policy.

Young India, 1-10-1925

APPENDIX III

FROM EUROPE

Not only India but also the rest of the earth has heard your message of satyagraha and swadeshi. A great number of young people in Europe believe in your creed. They see in it a new attitude to political things put into action, of which till now they had only dreamed.

But also among the young people who are convinced of the truth of your message are many who dissent from some details of your demands on men which seem wrong to them. In their name is this letter written.

In answer to a question you declared on the 21st of March, 1921 that satyagraha demands absolute non-violence and that even a woman who is in danger of being violated must not defend herself with violence. On the

other hand, it is known that you recommended the punishment of General Dyer by the English Government, which shows that you see the necessity for law guaranteed through violence. From this I can but conclude that you do not object to capital punishment and so do not condemn killing in general. You value life so low that you allow thousands of Indians to lose theirs for satyagraha and doubtless you know that the least interference with the life of men, imprisonment, is mainly based on the same principle as the strongest, killing, for in each case men are caused by an outside force to diverge from their dharma. A man who thinks logically knows that it is the same principle that causes his imprisonment for a few days or his execution and that the difference is only in the size not in the kind of interference. He knows, too, that a man who stands for punishment in general must not shrink from killing.

You see in non-co-operation not an ideal only but also a safe and quick way to freedom for India, a way possible only there where a whole population has to revolt against a government that has the force of arms. But when a whole State wants to get its rights from another State, then the principle of non-co-operation is powerless, for this other one may get a number of other States to form an alliance with it even when some of the other States remain neutral. Not until a real League of Nations exists, to which every State belongs, can non-co-operation become a real power, since no State can afford to be isolated from all the others. That is why we fight for the League of Nations, but that is also the reason why we try to retain a strong police force, lest internal revolts and disorder should make all foreign policy impossible. That is why we understand that other governments are doing what they forbade us to do: arming themselves in case of an attack by their enemies. They are, for the time being, obliged to do so, and we really ought to do the same if we don't want to be continually violated. We hope that you will see our point. If you do, we should be very much obliged to you if you would say so in answer to this letter, for it is necessary that the youth of Europe learns your true attitude to these questions. But please do not think that we want you to forswear something that is one of the main points of your creed, satyagraha.

But we see satyagraha not in an absolute non-violence which never, nowhere, has been really carried out, even by you, or even by Christ himself who drove the usurers out of the temple. With us, satyagraha is the unreserved disposition to brotherhood and sacrifice which you are showing us so splendidly with the Indian people and we hope to be growing into the same state of mind, since it has been understood that a system may be wicked but never a whole class or a whole people (you wrote about this on the 13th of July 1921) and that one ought to feel pity but not hatred for the blind defenders of wickedness. Men who come to understand this are taking their first steps on the new way to brotherhood between all men and this way will lead to the goal, to the victory of truth, to satyagraha.

We ask you, in your answer not only to advise us to fight for our country in the way we think right, but we would very much like to know, what you think to be right, especially how you justify an entire non-violence which we see as a resignation to all real fighting against wickedness and for this reason wicked in itself,—as we would call a policeman wicked who let a criminal escape unpunished.

Our conviction is that we ought to follow our own dharma first and before all that we ought to live the life designed for us by God, but that the right and the duty is given to us to interfere with the life of our fellow-men when they ask us to do so or when we see in such interference a way to fight a threatening evil for all the world. We believe that otherwise one is not right in interfering, for only God can see through the soul of men and judge what is the right way for men and we believe that there is no greater sacrilege to be found than to assume the place of God—which sacrilege we believe the English people to be guilty of, as they think to have the mission to interfere with people all over the world.

For this reason we don't understand how you can recommend to married people to deny themselves to each other without mutual agreement, for such an interference with the rights given by marriage can drive a man to crimes. You ought to advise divorce in those cases.

Please answer these our questions. We are so glad to have the model given by you that we want very much to be quite clear about the right way to live up to your standards.

Young India, 8-10-1925

APPENDIX IV

EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION

Europe boasts of her civilization, her Christian civilization.

The triumphant career of the white race throughout the earth is the watchword of the time.

A triumphant career of the race—that is true. But of civilization, humanity, Christianity? Justice turns her face away and weeps.

Will you find a hell of racial hatred and inhumanity? Then go to Europe.

Look at the collective policy of the Christian Powers in China. First act: shameless extortion, exercised for ages by European profiteers. Second act: the enraged natives react by killing a German ambassador. Third act: Europe undertakes her "Hunnish crusade" under German lead and in the spirit of that watchword, which was ironically pronounced by the satirical paper *Simplicissimus* in an imagined speech of a German officer: 'Now I pro-

pose a toast to a vigorous propagation of the Gospel and a victorious walk over the Chinese swine-dogs (*schweinehunde*)!'

Too justly the Chinese have called us 'the red-haired barbarians' or 'red-haired devils'.

Let us now look at some species of the European Homo sapiens

The Italians may deserve honourable mention, because Christianity caused them to give up their bestial baitings of wild beasts about 400 A.D. How unwillingly the ancient Romans gave up their *circenses* appears from a curious anecdote. A clergyman found it difficult to keep the converted away from the circus. Then he said; 'Dear Christians! You *must* avoid these bloody heathen plays. Then, in reward, you may hope that in heaven there may be a peep-hole through which you may regard the condemned sinners in the eternal fire of hell!' Indeed, a fine and noble 'Christian' idea!

To characterize the standard of the 'most Christian' nation of Spaniards, it is sufficient to mention the fact that the favourite play of the nation is till this day the bullfight. The national hero is the grand toreador—a cruel tormentor of animals.

France has created the hunting *parforce*.

England adheres to the same noble sport. Look at the illustrated papers published in honour of the Christmas, the Christian feast of peace and charity! During a dinner in Denmark, a Danish gentlemen by the way told an English lady that he had shot a fox. 'Good gracious! You don't say so! Shot a fox?' cried she immediately, seizing him by his arm. Then she turned him her back with contempt—for it was unworthy of a gentleman *not* to torment the poor animal to death! A Danish clergyman sailing on the Red Sea once witnessed the natives diving from the steamer for coins. But the English ladies were not content to see them jump out from the deck; they ordered them to jump out from the tops of the masts, to make it more exciting! The opium war and the treatment of Ireland in past centuries are other proofs of English morals. Owing to the resistance of the English nation to conscription, England fortunately has avoided the use of forced cannon-food. But what was the munificently promised reward of the Indian volunteers in the Great War? It is sufficient to name Amritsar.

Germany has created the most brutal 'moral of masters' before the Bolshevism and the most systematic oppression of the nations 'of minor value' (*minderwertig*). The Pan-German programme of 1895 privileges the 'full Germans' to vote, to be elected for parliaments and offices, and to buy ground property. 'They willingly tolerate the foreigners in the country as exercisers of the *inferior bodily labour*.' A Danish surgeon as visitor in a German hospital once witnessed the transfer of living tissue from one body into another. As he wondered how it would be possible to obtain sufficient mass of tissue, the German professor answered: "*Wir haben ja Polen genug* (we have enough of Poles)." The Delbruck Law of 1912 enabled German emigrants to remain secretly citi-

zens of the German Empire after they had officially obtained the citizenship of the unsuspecting foreign states—fine and noble means of creating thousands of underground agents of Pan-Germanism. Conscription procured the Germans millions of sons of the *minderwertig* nations to serve as cannon-food in their wars, while the relations of the victims were oppressed at home in the most brutal manner. 6,000 Danes from North Schlesvig were thus slaughtered in the Great War for a foreign and hated cause. Through the 'civil conscription', the Germans carried away thousands of Belgians into slavery; sometimes, these wretches were even forced to work within the line of fire.

Bolshevism is indebted to the great German Staff for the fortunate foundation of its rule. Pan-German methods of brutality and lie are unfortunately practised and even surpassed. We observe an element of Jewish fanaticism, which results in mere madness. We may here refer to the contents of a Bolshevist poem from the collection *Tsheks ulibajet,* published in 1922 by A. Saprudni: "You prefer to sing of love. I will teach you other songs, of blood, execution, and death. Enough of the gentle fragrance of lilacs! I prefer the flowers of murder. It is the highest delight to crucify the man who loves his neighbour. What a fun to cut a man to pieces. Look, how he quivers for fear, look at his convulsions while he is slowly strangled by the hangman. What a pleasure to inflict wounds. Listen to our sentence of death: a rope, a shot! A wall! Give fire! —And the grave is your fate."

Three points of European morals are emphasized, viz., the moral of masters, the policy of lie, and the policy of murder. In order to illustrate the European standard, I quote an address delivered by Professor Theol. Baumgarten in Kiel, 1915 (printed in *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung,* 15th May, 1915).

The pious professor states that the Sermon on the Mount simply excludes war. But this rule is only meant for single persons. "The ethical system of the Sermon on the Mount represents another compartment of our moral life than our national standard. Its rules for the single soul are not broken, because we realize that it is not at the same time a law for our national and social life." The State, says Prof. B., is created by God and must be defended with the utmost energy. "It is a characteristic of the great nation that it uses the most extreme means, and even the war of aggression, in order to carry out its great aims." "We Germans feel obliged, not only to agree with the war, but also to lead it with the most absolute recklessness. He who has not in these days made up his mind to salute the destruction of Lusitania with jubilant applause and to rejoice at the formidable power of German arms is no right German."

Young India, 15-10-1925

APPENDIX V

THE CULT OF THE CHARKHA

By Rabindranath Tagore

Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray has marked me with his censure in printer's ink, for that I have been unable to display enthusiasm in the turning of the charkha. But, because it is impossible for him to be pitiless to me, even when awarding punishment, he has provided me with a companion in my ignominy in the illustrious person of Acharya Brajendra Nath Seal. That has taken away the pain of it, and also given me fresh proof of the eternal human truth, that we are in agreement with some people and with some others we are not. It only proves that while creating man's mind, God did not have for his model the spider mentality doomed to a perpetual conformity in its production of web and that it is an outrage upon human nature to force it through a mill and reduce it to some standardized commodity of uniform size and shape and purpose.

* * *

Our Shastras tell us that the divine *shakti* is many-sided, so that a host of different factors operate in the work of creation. In death these merge into sameness; for chaos alone is uniform. God has given to man the same many-sided *shakti*, for which reason the civilizations of his creation have their divine wealth of diversity. It is God's purpose that in the societies of man the various should be strung together into a garland of unity; while often the mortal providence of our public life, greedy for particular results, seeks to knead them all into a lump of uniformity. That is why we see in the concerns of this world so many identically-liveried, machine-made workers, so many marionettes pulled by the same string: and on the other hand, wherever the human spirit has not been reduced to the coldness of collapse, we also see perpetual rebelliousness against this mechanical, mortar-pounded homogeneity.

If in any country we find no symptom of such rebellion, if we find its people submissively or contentedly prone on the dust, in dumb terror of some master's bludgeon, or blind acceptance of some guru's injunction, then indeed should we know that for such a country, *in extremis*, it is high time to mourn.

In our country this ominous process of being levelled down into sameness has long been at work. Every individual of every caste has his function assigned to him, together with the obsession into which he has been hypnotized, that, since he is bound by some divine mandate, accepted by his first ancestor, it would be sinful for him to seek relief therefrom. This imitation of the social scheme of ant-life makes very easy the performance of petty rou-

tine duties, but specially difficult the attainment of manhood's estate. It imparts skill to the limbs of the man who is a bondsman, whose labour is drudgery; but it kills the mind of a man who is a doer, whose work is creation. So in India, during long ages past, we have the spectacle of only a repetition of that which has gone before.

* * *

It was while some of us were thinking of the ways and means of adopting this principle in our institution that I came across the book called "The National Being" written by that Irish idealist, A.E., who has a rare combination in himself of poetry and practical wisdom. There I could see a great concrete realization of the co-operative living of my dreams. It became vividly clear to me what varied results could flow therefrom, how full the life of man could be made thereby. I could understand how great the concrete truth was in any plane of life, the truth that in separation is bondage, in union is liberation. It has been said in the Upanishad that Brahma is reason, Brahma is spirit, but Anna also is Brahma, which means that Food also represents an eternal truth, and therefore through it we may arrive at a great realization, if we travel along the true path.

* * *

It is extremely distasteful to me to have to differ from Mahatma Gandhi in regard to any matter of principle or method. Not that, from a higher standpoint, there is anything wrong in so doing; but my heart shrinks from it. For what could be a greater joy than to join hands in the field of work with one for whom one has such love and reverence? Nothing is more wonderful to me than Mahatmaji's great moral personality. In him divine Providence has given us a burning thunderbolt of *shakti*. May this *shakti* give power to India,—not overwhelm her,—that is my prayer! The difference in our standpoints and temperaments has made the Mahatma look upon Rammohan Roy as a pigmy, while I revere him as a giant. The same difference makes the Mahatma's field of work one which my conscience cannot accept as its own. That is a regret which will abide with me always. It is, however, God's will that man's paths of endeavour shall be various, else why these differences of mentality?

How often have my personal feelings of regard strongly urged me to accept at Mahatma Gandhi's hands my enlistment as a follower of the charkha cult, but as often have my reason and conscience restrained me, lest I should be a party to the raising of the charkha to a higher place than is its due, thereby distracting attention from other more important factors in our task of all-round reconstruction. I feel sure that Mahatmaji himself will not fail to understand me, and keep for me the same forbearance which he has always had. Acharya Roy, I also believe, has respect for independence of opinion, even when unpopular; so that, although when carried away by the fervour of his own propaganda he may now and then give me a scolding, I doubt

not he retains for me a soft corner in his heart. As for my countrymen, the public accustomed as they are to drown, under the facile flow of their minds, both past services and past disservices done to them, if today they cannot find it in their hearts to forgive, they will forget tomorrow. Even if they do not, —if for me their displeasure is fated to be permanent, then just as today I have Acharya Seal as my fellow-culprit, so tomorrow I may find at my side persons rejected by their own country whose radiance reveals the black unreality of any stigma of popular disapprobation.

The Modern Review, September, 1925

APPENDIX VI

THE CANKER OF SUPERIORITY

1. Our Samiti aims at unity and regeneration of our community.

2. Your mission as we understand is threefold:

   (a) Introduction and spread of khaddar and charkha.
   (b) Hindu-Muslim unity.
   (c) Removal of untouchability.

The first two are common to all. We have come to you mainly in connection with the third item and beg leave to give you an idea as to how untouchability stands in the way of unification of the Hindus in Bengal.

3. In Bengal, Hindu Society may be principally grouped into two classes.

(i) *Jal acharaniya* (ii) *Anacharaniya*.

Group (i) consists of:

Brahmins
Baidyas
Kayasthas
Navashakas (meaning 9 or 10 castes)

Group (ii):

Baishyashahas
Subarnabanikas (Goldsmiths)
Sutradharas (Carpenters)
Jogis (Weavers)
Sundis (Wine sellers)
Fishermen
Bhui Malis (Sweepers)
Dhopas (Washermen)
Muchis or *Reshees* (Cobblers and Drummers)
Kapaliks
Namasudras, and others.

Some of these are classified as depressed classes by the Census authorities.

Of the first group the first three classes claim to dominate the rest of the Hindu Society and not only do they despise them (particularly those belonging to group (ii) at heart, but oppress them in various ways, e.g., (i) Freedom of worship in our access to public temples not allowed (ii) mess and hostel difficulties of the students of the 2nd group; (iii) entrance into hotels and sweetmeat shops resented.

In Bengal, those who are taking lead in the movement for removal of untouchability are not, in our opinion, adopting the right method and have not made any appreciable progress in this direction.

According to the census of 1921, of the total Hindu population of Bengal numbering 2,09,40,000 and odd, the Brahmins (13,09,000, i.e., 17%) *Kayasthas* (12,97,000, i.e., 16%) and *Baidyas* (1,03,000, i.e., 1%) together count only 28,09,000[1] or thereabouts.

Baishyashaha community of East Bengal and Sylhet—one of the premier mercantile communities in Bengal—are mainly confined to parts of Mymensing, Pabna, Bogra, Rajshahi, Faridpur, Dacca, Noakhali, Chittagong, Tippera and Sylhet, the total population coming up to 3,60,000, i.e., 3½% of the entire Hindu population of Bengal.

Literacy per *mille* among the *Baishyashahas* is 342; while that of

Baidyas	662	*Subarnabanik*	383
Brahmins	484	*Gandhabanik*	344
Kayasthas	413		

Literacy is much less amongst all other *Acharaniya* classes not to speak of those held *Anacharaniya*.

Our community does not lag behind others in founding and maintaining educational and charitable institutions, e.g., several colleges, many High and M. E. Schools and charitable dispensaries and hopsitals, tanks, pucca wells, etc., besides private donations to institutions, educational, charitable and religious.

In point of manners, customs and hospitality this community yields to no other class. As regards female education, this community is by no means less advanced.

In spite of all these, we are treated as if we are outside the pale of Hindu society. And up till now no sincere attempt has been made to recognize our proper status in the Hindu community, although the members of these communities never keep aloof from taking part in all national movements. But for the social disabilities and difficulties attendant thereon, this community could be much more useful.

[1] This appears to be a slip. The total should be 27,09,000.

This community is quite distinct from the *Sundis*. Taking advantage of the fact that the *Sundis* also use the surname *Shaha*, the narrow-minded members of the Hindu society, envious of our prosperity, have been maliciously and falsely stigmatizing this community by classing them with the *Sundis* (liquor traders). We have, however, succeeded to a great extent to remove the mischievous and wrong notions created as above, establishing from history that this community belonging to *Baishya Barna* migrated from time to time for trading purposes from North Western India and settled in parts of East Bengal and Sylhet, and that, as this community could not shake off the Buddhistic influence as easily as the other classes when Brahminism revived, they were not given a proper place in the Hindu society and left in a despised condition.

For the purpose of ameliorating our condition and for having our proper status recognized, we have formed associations which are doing considerable work.

Total removal of untouchability is in the opinion of this community, essential to solidarity of the Hindus and, consequently, to Hindu-Muslim unity. We approach you, Mahatmaji, with the request that, in your public utterances, regarding untouchability, you will not lose sight of the peculiar features of the Hindu society in Bengal, as we have tried to give you an idea of; and we solicit your advice, as of one who is a born devotee to and fighter for the cause of the down-trodden, in our fight with the bureaucracy in the Hindu society.

Young India, 5-11-1925

APPENDIX VII

SPINNING IN AMERICA

The Revolution was a war of independence by independents; for aside from their pioneeer daring and courage, faith, endurance and marksmanship, their main strength of preparedness lay in the fact that every home made its own food, drink, medicine, fuel, lighting, clothing and shelter. It was more effective than gun-powder.

In this winter climate without the handlooms and spinning-wheels, and the flax and sheep fold of every home, the American soldier would have died of exposure to the winter cold.

The wool and flax were raised and spun at home into thread and yarn, and knit into stockings, mittens, caps and blankets, or woven into clothing.

After the hard work of clearing trees and pulling stumps, as well as removing large stones, the flax and hemp patch was planted. This operation alone took all the energy that is consumed in several football games, with fewer fatalities.

Even the children were given a share in the work, as they had to weed the patch. The stalks were very tender when they first came up, and the children had to work bare-footed and step facing the wind, so if any plants were trodden down the wind would blow the fallen plant back into place.

* * *

Daughters' feet in those days were used to work the treadle, and often to rock a heavy wooden cradle, while mother churned the butter, and she was cheered with the thought that at night, she could put on a clean kerchief and adjust her curls, and go on spinning, but she would have help for the sweetheart would come after sunset when he had finished swingling the flax. She would spin until the clock reel ticked at rare and propitious moments, when it had counted the exact number of strands in a knot—usually forty. Then the spinner would stop and tie the knot while her companion would do what he could in those rare moments toward trying another kind of knot, for according to a quaint old ballad, "He kissed Mistress Polly when the clock reel ticked".

When the early American woman wished to spend the day in cheerful companionship, she would rise with the sun, do her household chores, then jump on horseback and with her flax wheel tied behind, and the baby under one arm, ride to her neighbour's home, sometimes at quite a distance from her home.

Spinning Tournaments

In 1754, spinning exhibitions were held and on such occasions, ministers preached to the spinsters as they gathered with their wheels. One of these is described by an old antiquarian in a quaint way: "A number of respectable ladies of the town, met at sunrise with their wheels, to spend the day at the house of the Rev. Jedidiah Jewell, in the laudable design of a spinning match.

"At an hour before sunset, the ladies there appearing neatly dressed, principally in homespun, a polite and generous repast of American production was set for their entertainment. After which, many being present of both sexes, Mr. Jewell delivered a profitable discourse from Romans xii, 2: 'Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord'."

Matters of church and patriotism were never far apart in New England, so when spinners gathered at New London, Newbury, Ipswich or Beverly, they always had a sermon, with an appropriate text. One favourite text was: "And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands." Exodus xxxv, 25.

"Truly it was a pleasing sight; some spinning, some reeling, some carding cotton, some combing flax, as they were preached to," said a contemporary writer.

* * *

In 1640 the courts of Massachusetts and Connecticut passed two orders directing the growth of flax, ascertaining what colonists were skilful in breaking, spinning, weaving, ordering that boys and girls be taught to spin, and offering a bounty for linen, grown, spun and woven in the colony.

Every family was ordered to spin so many pounds of flax a year, or to pay a fine. Prizes were offered for quantity and quality and societies were formed for promoting industry, and frugality by the rich and poor.

Benjamin Franklin wrote later in Poor Richard's Almanac:

"Many estates are spent in the getting,

Since women for tea forsook spinning and knitting."

The 'all wool and a yard wide' goods which we purchase so easily today meant the work of many weeks and months to the colonial dame.

Wool-spinning is one of the most flexible and alert series of movements imaginable and to its varied poises our grandmothers may owe part of the dignity of carriage that was so characteristic of them.

* * *

In the summer of 1775, Congress made a demand on the people, for 13,000 warm coats to be ready for the soldiers by cold weather.

There were no contractors then to supply cloth and garments, but throughout the country by hundreds of hearthstones, woolwheels and hand-looms were started eagerly at work, and the order was filled by the work of patriotic women of America.

HEROES IN HOMESPUN

Washington's army was called "the Homespuns" in derision, but there was more in the name than they knew just then. As for the women, they grew to love their looms as companions in the conflict, and they wove their prayers and love into the cloth.

In 1775, one of these patriotic women of Colchester, Coun, named Abigail Foote, wrote down her daily work in her diary, and here is sample of a day's work:

"Fixed gown for Prude, mended mother's riding-ho, spun short thread, fixed two gowns for Welch's girls, carded tow, spun linen, worked on cheese basket, hatchel'd flax with Hannah, (we did 51 pounds apiece), spooled a piece, milked the cows, spun the linen, did 50 knots, made a broom of Guinea wheat straw, spun thread to whiten, set a red dye, had two scholars from Mrs. Taylor's. I carded two pounds of whole wool, spun twine, scoured the pewter."

* * *

The sound of the spinning-wheel, the song of the spinster, and the snapping of the clock reel, all have ceased. The thwack of the loom is heard only in the factory.

The spinning-wheel no longer hums in the house of the farmer but it has left a song in our hearts, so that for the sake of beauty alone, it is beginning to hum in the halls of learning.

Right here in the old Hampstead house atmosphere, the wheel is beginning to turn in Charter house, and the homelike art of weaving is being revived, and spinning contests take place at commencement, as the Priscillas of today seek their beloved wheels again.

Longfellow's poem "The Courtship of Miles Standish" has given us the words to the song of the spinning-wheel, and in this poem Priscilla shows the magic of the wheel in love:

"Straight up rose from her wheel the beautiful Puritan maiden.
Pleased with the praise of her thrift from him whose praise was the sweetest;
Drew from the reel on the table, a snowy skein of her spinning,
Thus making an answer, meanwhile to the flattering praises of Alden;
'Come, you must not be idle if I am a pattern for housewives,
Show yourself equally worthy of being the model of husbands
Hold this skein on your hands, while I wind it, ready for knitting.'

* * *

Thus with a jest and a laugh, the skein on his hands she adjusted,
He sitting awkwardly there, with his arms extended before him,
She standing graceful, erect and winding the thread from his fingers,
Sometimes chiding a little his clumsy manner of holding,
Sometimes touching his hands, as she disentangled expertly
Twist or knot in the yarn, unawares for how could she help it?"

If one has any prejudice against Priscilla let him read this peaceful poem, and catch the spirit of the spinning, and the homely sound of the humming.

Young India, 19-11-1925

SOURCES

Aaj: Hindi Daily published from Varanasi.

Amrita Bazar Patrika: English newspaper of Calcutta which first appeared in 1868 as a Bengali weekly; a daily since 1891.

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne (Gujarati): Ed. Manibehn Patel, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1957.

Bapuna Patro—Sardar Vallabhbhaine (Gujarati): Ed. Manibehn Patel, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1957.

Bapuni Prasadi (Gujarati): Tr. Mathuradas Trikumji, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1948.

(*The*) *Bombay Chronicle*: English daily published from Bombay.

(*A*) *Bunch of Old Letters*: Jawaharlal Nehru, Asia Publishing House, 1958.

(*The*) *Englishman*: English Newspaper from Calcutta.

Forward: English daily started by C. R. Das from Calcutta.

GANDHI SMARAK SANGRAHALAYA, NEW DELHI: Central Museum and Library of Gandhian Literature and Documents; *vide* Vol. I, p. 349.

Gandhijiki Chhatrachhayamen: G. D. Birla, Sasta Sahitya Mandal, New Delhi.

(*The*) *Hindu*: English newspaper issued from Madras; started as a weekly in 1878, became a tri-weekly in 1883 and a daily since 1889.

(*The*) *Hindustan Times*: English newspaper published from Delhi.

In the Shadow of the Mahatma: G. D. Birla, Orient Longmans Ltd., India, 1953.

Krishnath College Centenary Commemoration Volume

(*The*) *Leader*: English daily published from Allahabad.

Modern Review: English monthly published from Calcutta.

(THE) MANUSCRIPT OF MAHADEV DESAI'S DIARY: Kept in Swarajya Bhawan, Bardoli.

Mahadevbhaini Diary, Vol. VIII, (Gujarati): Narhari D. Parikh; Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1951.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA, NEW DELHI

Navajivan (1919-1931): Gujarati weekly (with occasional bi-weekly issues) edited by Gandhiji and published from Ahmedabad; first issued on September 7, 1919. It was converted from *Navajivan ane Satya*, Gujarati monthly (1915-1919). Also issued in Hindi from August 19, 1921.

SABARMATI SANGRAHALAYA: Library and records containing documents relating to Gandhiji's South African period and Indian period up to 1933; *vide* Vol. I, p. 349.

The Searchlight: English daily published from Patna.

Young India (1918-31): English weekly founded by Jamnadas Dwarkadas at Bombay, from May 7, 1919, published bi-weekly under Gandhiji's supervision; from October 1919, issued as a weekly from Ahmedabad with Gandhiji as Editor.

CHRONOLOGY

(August 1, 1925 – November 22, 1925)

Before *August 1:* In Calcutta, Gandhiji gave interview to *The Englishman.*

August 1: On death-anniversary of Tilak, in a speech exhorted people to work for swaraj through khaddar and spinning.

August 4: Spoke at meeting of Indian Christians.

August 6: Visited Krishnath College, Behrampur, where he was given an address and purse for Deshbandhu Memorial.

August 7: Sir Surendranath Banerjea died at Barrackpore.
Gandhiji paid a condolence visit to Sir Surendranath's home.

August 8: Addressed gathering of Indians and Europeans at Tata Steel Works, Jamshedpur.

August 9: Addressed officers of Tata Steel Works.
At a mass meeting of labourers, exhorted them to shun evil of drinking.

August 12: In Calcutta, visited offices of *Basumati.*
At Chowringhee Branch of Y.M.C.A., spoke on "The Duty of Indian Christian Young Men".

August 14: Visited handloom factory at Shreerampur.

August 15: Moving condolence resolution at meeting in Calcutta, paid homage to Sir Surendranath Banerjea, and laid emphasis on need for social reforms.

August 18: Spoke at Rotary Club meeting in Calcutta on charkha.

August 19: In Cuttack, visited Utkal Charmalaya; later addressed public meeting.

August 21: Giving interview to *The Englishman*, in Calcutta, explained his stand on Suhrawardy's resignation from Swaraj Party.

August 24: Discussed with leaders of both communities riots at Titagarh.

August 25: Spoke at meeting of College Branch of Y.M.C.A.

August 26: In interview to members of Psycho-analytical Society, discussed factors responsible for Hindu-Muslim problem.

August 27: Issued statement to Press regarding forthcoming A.I.-C.C. meeting at Patna where changes in Congress constitution were to be discussed.

August 28: In Overtoun Hall, Calcutta, spoke on Nationalism.

August 29: Addressing students of Ashutosh College, asked them to adopt national outlook.
Spoke at meeting of Indian Christians.

September 1: Left Calcutta, reaching Bombay on September 3.

September 3: In interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*, gave his impressions of Bengal tour.

September 4: Gave interview to *Forward.*
Presided over public meeting held to celebrate centenary of Dadabhai Naoroji.

September 6: At Ahmedabad, addressing Labour Union members, asked them to be courteous, truthful and honest in their work.

September 12: Reached Purulia.
Received addresses at public meeting. Unveiled portrait of C. R. Das.
Attended 16th Bihar Provincial Political Conference.

September 13: Spoke at women's meeting; at another meeting of untouchables, called upon them to eradicate evils of drinking and gambling.

September 15: At Chakradharpur, addressed students of National School.

September 16: Reached Ranchi by car.
Received addresses from municipality and untouchables; spoke at women's meeting.

September 17: At public meeting declared that charkha alone could feed India's starving millions.

September 18: In Hazaribagh, spoke at public meeting.
Addressed students of St. Columbus College.

September 21: Spoke at meeting in Patna.

September 22: Presided over the All-India Congress Committee meeting.
Resolution to establish All-India Spinners' Association was passed.
At District Khilafat Conference, Patna, Gandhiji spoke on Hindu-Muslim unity, and appealed to people to take to spinning and khaddar.

September 24: Constitution of All-India Spinners' Association finalized.
At public meeting, laid emphasis on need of spinning and weaving of khaddar.
Laid foundation stone of National School at Khagaul.
Spoke at women's meeting.

September 25: In Press statement, regretted his inability to complete Bihar tour.
At Bikram, addressed public meeting.

September 29: At meeting, replying to municipal address, pointed out and emphasized duties of civic bodies towards citizens.

October 1: At Bhagalpur, attended and spoke at Provincial Marwari Conference.
Speaking at public meeting, invited members of all communities to join All-India Spinners' Association.

October 7: Addressed meetings at Giridih.

October 13: Spoke at meeting in Vishanpur.

October 16: Addressing Ballia District Conference, said that charkha was the only remedy for India's poverty.

October 17: At students' meeting in Kashi Vidyapith, Banaras, advised them to spin regularly.
In Lucknow, addressed two meetings.
Replied to address presented by municipality at Sitapur. At another meeting, told Hindus not to bear ill will against Muslims.

October 18: Attending U.P. Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, declared that Hindi should be national language.
At U.P. Political Conference spoke on charkha and evil of untouchability.
Addressed Anti-untouchability Conference.

October 21: In Bombay, before leaving on Kutch tour by steamer, addressed people gathered at Ferry Wharf, Carnac Bunder.

October 22: At Dwarka, received address from people's deputation on board steamer.
Speaking at meeting in Bhuj, said if untouchability among Hindus was not removed, Hinduism would be destroyed.

October 23: At another meeting in Bhuj, declared that cause of cow-protection suffered through folly of so-called "servants of the cow".

October 31: Spoke at public meeting at Mandvi.

November 2: Spoke at public meeting at *Anjar*.

Before *November 6:* In interview to Press, declared his intention to assist Swarajists in accordance with his promise.

November 22: Opening "Youth Week" organized by students of Ahmedabad, urged them to be optimistic and imbibe spirit of sacrifice and self-control.

INDEX OF TITLES

INDEX


LIBRARY